

"YOU SEEM MERRY," SHE SAID.

W. S. GALEY

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THE
CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

JULY, 1882.

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BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER X.

MR. LAURISTON ON CONSOLATION.

"Console if you will, I can bear it."



MR. LAURISTON'S anticipations had proved correct. His cousin had welcomed Miss Conway's proposition with ready cordiality, and subscribed to all that he had suggested as to the nature of the arrangement. "Let us try our autumn trip together," she said cheerfully. "I shall be very glad of a fellow traveller, and we shall see how we get on."

"I hope we shall get on," said Rachel.

"So do I," Mrs. Latham replied. "We are unanimous so far. And

I don't see why we shouldn't. You mustn't look for anything transcendental in me, but from an ordinary, everyday point of view, I believe I am tolerably easy to live with."

"Well," smiled Rachel, "life is mostly made up of every days, isn't it? I don't quite know how to put that properly."

Mrs. Latham nodded. "That's true, but I wasn't sure you were quite as everyday as some of us. But if Adam has said anything about me to you, he has probably prepared you for my prosaic character. Does he strike you as being sentimental, Miss Conway?"

Rachel hesitated. "He is a little bitter sometimes, and hopeless, isn't he? But he isn't prosaic."

"No," said Mrs. Latham; "that bygone romance of his has set him up in poetry for the rest of his life, poor fellow! If he looks gloomy, one is bound to suppose he is recalling the past. Well, perhaps he may be, but never mind Adam now." And she plunged straightway into practical details.

Miss Whitney was a little reassured by Mrs. Latham's confidence. Since she was quite willing to take Rachel abroad, she could not think that she was very mad, and the good lady was sufficiently comforted to profess her readiness to return home, with a promise of frequent letters. Rachel added the assurance that she would go and see her on her return. The new companions went to the train with her, and there encountered Mr. Lauriston, who remembered how profoundly Miss Whitney distrusted feminine ability to deal with porters and luggage, and was waiting to see her off. "So ends my old life," said Rachel to him, when the train started on its journey with laborious snorts of steam.

"So begins the new," he answered as they turned to follow Mrs. Latham. "You start to-morrow, don't you? I shall look in this evening to see if there is anything I can do."

"You will have to see us off in the morning," said Mrs. Latham, "unless you want us to be jealous of Miss Whitney. I'm not helpless," she continued, as soon as Mr. Lauriston had bowed himself off, and she and Rachel were going home together, "but it is rather pleasant to have nothing to think about when one gets to the station. With Adam there is never anything to think about, and he may as well come as not. He has nothing to do."

Mrs. Latham had discovered that Rachel had never crossed the Channel, and had instantly given up some vague ideas of Brighton or St. Leonards. "It's time you should make a beginning; it doesn't much matter where we go," she said.

"I'm afraid you'll find there are so many things in which I haven't made a beginning," the girl replied.

"Don't trouble yourself about that. It isn't of the least importance at your age. The terrible thing is to have begun badly, and I know you haven't done that!"

Rachel smiled. "At your age!" she repeated to herself. She felt as if she were at least threescore and ten. And yet she was conscious of a faint sensation of pleasure in the thought that they were not going to settle down by the seaside and look vaguely out over the waves, but that they were actually to cross them, and put the sea between her and all the haunted places she had known.

After luncheon that last day they sat by the window, while Mrs. Latham made out a list of some little things she wanted to get that afternoon. Rachel was idly leaning back, fanning herself with a Japanese fan which she had taken from the chimney-piece. "That makes four shops," said Laura abstractedly. "I thought there had been five."

"Five?" said Miss Conway. There was a pause, and then she looked from behind the slowly waving fan. Her companion was thoughtfully pressing the end of her pencil against her lip, but her eyes were fixed on Rachel's left hand which lay on the arm of her chair. The fan stopped instantly; Mrs. Latham looked up, and encountered a glance which said so unmistakably, "You may say exactly what you please," that she answered with a question.

"Adam gave you that ring, didn't he?"

"Yes."

Mrs. Latham nodded. "I thought I knew it. He brought it from Italy; at least, it was one spring after he had been to Italy that he began to wear it."

Rachel had not moved her hand. She looked calmly at it. "Mr. Lauriston made me a promise—a very kind promise," she said. "And the ring was a pledge that it should never be forgotten."

"I see," said Mrs. Latham, smiling. "You rub the ring, Arabian Nights fashion, and the genius appears—isn't that like Adam! Well, Miss Conway, if it is any comfort for you to know it, I can assure you that if you rub your ring, the genius will certainly come."

"I think he will," said Rachel, gazing out of the window.

"I am sure he will. Adam would tell you that he never piqued himself on anything. I believe one of his pet Frenchmen says you shouldn't; I remember his quoting something about it one day. But it isn't true; he piques himself intensely on his fidelity."

"Yes?" said the girl, turning her questioning eyes on her companion.

"Yes. He always did, ever since he was a mere lad. I don't think Adam ever thought that anything in the world could be quite as sacred as his word. He shrugs his shoulders, you know, and lets most things go. But, if he has made a promise, he shrugs his shoulders just the same, but he keeps it."

Rachel turned the ring absently on her finger. "Take care!" said Mrs. Latham with a good-humoured smile, "you will have him here if you do that, and we shall be obliged to take him out shopping. It's true that he is not as tiresome in a shop as most men."

"But does he always shrug his shoulders?" Miss Conway asked abruptly. "Did he always, I mean?"

"Yes, I think so, more or less," was the indifferent answer. Then Mrs. Latham suddenly recollected herself. "No," she said, "I remember one time when he didn't."

Rachel understood, and waited for her to say more. But after a minute Laura continued, "I suppose it was partly affectation when he was a boy, but I don't know. He had a foolish mother, and three half-sisters, of whom two were soured, and one was silly. I think he soon began to shrug his shoulders at their squabbles."

"That was very sad for him," said Rachel.

Mrs. Latham answered "Yes," as a matter of course, but it was evident that the influence of circumstances on her cousin's character was not a subject which she cared to pursue, and she was already looking at her pencilled list, when Rachel asked, "Did you know Mrs. Lauriston?"

"His mother? Oh, you mean his wife? Yes; that is, I spent a day with her before she was Mrs. Lauriston, and I saw her once afterwards, when they had been home from their honeymoon two days. That was all."

Rachel mused, then put her next question. "And what was she like?"

Mrs. Latham stretched her arms a little. "Oh, very beautiful," she answered, "as she was bound to be."

"Why bound to be?"

"Why, to be a fit and proper heroine for such a love story. Adam had had his little flirtations like other men; who was to suppose that he was going to fall in love with this girl just as if he were the first Adam, and there was not another woman in the world? My dear, it was as serious as Milton, and quite as slow, at any rate for the bystanders."

"He couldn't think of anybody else?"

"We didn't exist," said Mrs. Latham tersely. "And I can't help it, but I don't find it amusing when I don't exist. We were just so many lay figures grouped round his happiness."

Rachel smiled. "And that was when he didn't shrug his shoulders?"

"That was the time. No, he was worshipping her; he was not a bit like himself. I don't care to see a man in such a beatific condition in the midst of this commonplace working-day world; it is a little too much for me. Perhaps if I were the object of the rapturous devotion," said Mrs. Latham with a laugh, "I might be more lenient, but I doubt it even then. I'm too hopelessly prosaic. I have no doubt that Mrs. Adam Lauriston thought him charming, but to other people the whole affair was rather silly."

"I suppose she was very much in love with him?"

"Oh, yes! He found her in some out-of-the-way place; her father was a country gentleman whose estate was mortgaged, so that I suppose he hadn't a penny to spare. I don't believe the girl had ever been to town in her life; she was just a beautiful innocent-looking child. Not a fool—Adam never liked fools. But I don't imagine that she had seen many people; I don't know what society there was down there, but I should think not much. I dare say Adam was a revelation to her, and it was very natural that she should think him perfection. It was a case of love at first sight on his part, I know."

"And then she died!" said Rachel half to herself.

"Yes; just within the year. It was very sad."

The girl was silent for a moment. Through Mrs. Latham's somewhat unsympathetic description she divined the sweetness of an idyll whose grace and tenderness might well have taught Mr. Lauriston to scorn Charley's blunt, unpolished love-making. "How cruelly he must have felt it!" she said at last.

"As you see," was the answer. "He was very silent about it from the first; it doesn't do to attempt to sympathise with Adam. But, though he says nothing, I don't suppose he will ever be the same again. And, indeed," said Mrs. Latham, dropping her pencil, and stooping to pick it up again, "I don't see how he could be. One doesn't have two such passions in a lifetime. The first is excusable, though it may be a trifle absurd, but the second would be simply unendurable. It would spoil everything."

Rachel vaguely assented. Again there was a pause; but Mrs. Latham's flexible mouth had a touch of smiling scorn in its silence, which showed that she had not gone back to her shopping, but was still thinking of her cousin's passion. When her companion spoke, she turned her bright dark eyes towards her instantly.

"Mr. Lauriston does not seem to have his little boy very much with him," said Miss Conway.

"No. I don't believe he can bear the sight of him."

"He is so like his mother?"

"Well, I suppose he would naturally remind Adam of his loss. But like Mrs. Lauriston—no! Babies vary very much, of course, but the only time I ever saw that child he was hideous—like a little goblin, or changeling, or something of that kind. He had quite a quantity of hair, and Adam's eyes shining out of a wizened little yellow face. They had brought him up for the doctor to see; he was a miserable little wretch; screaming and flourishing his skinny little arms. He looked as if he might be any age—as if he might be ninety," said Mrs. Latham, sitting up, and evidently warming to her work of description; "he looked as if he might have gone to the Indies in a previous existence, to make his fortune, and ruined his health before he was born. He did, really. Oh, he was dreadful, with his little clawing hands! I hope he is better now, but I never dare look at Adam when I ask after him."

Rachel could not help smiling at Mrs. Latham's voluble disgust. Then, in a compassionate voice, "He is lame, too," she said.

"I'm afraid he always will be. There is something wrong with one foot. It would have been a mercy," said Laura seriously, "if the poor little fellow had died."

"Oh, no!" cried Rachel. "He may improve, surely. And if he had died it would have been sadder still. His father would have nobody in the world—nobody to come after him."

"What, at Redlands? Oh, yes, he would."

Rachel's eyes seemed to ask if they might ask a question.

"There's a young cousin of ours," said Mrs. Latham. "Adam made rather a favourite of him, and we used to think that, if he didn't marry, Richard would most likely be his heir, if anything happened to him. Such a nice, dear boy; you must see Richard one of these days." Her voice softened as she spoke his name. "I really can't be glad that that poor little cripple lingers on to take his place."

Rachel was silent, drawing down her brows in puzzled thought, and conscious of a vague and perfectly unreasonable prejudice against the unknown Richard. Till she saw Mrs. Latham she had thought of Mr. Lauriston as a lonely man. Now she caught a glimpse of him in the midst of a crowd of relations, who based calculations on his liking, and looked beyond him to the ownership of Redlands Hall. Their practical and business-like expectations made her claim upon him seem visionary and unreal. She clasped her hands loosely together, so that she touched and hid his ring.

"Why," said Mrs. Latham suddenly, "of course it was the boot-maker's I wanted to go to! How could I be so stupid! That makes the five."

Rachel had been struck by the tone in which Mrs. Latham talked of Mr. Lauriston's marriage. The cousins were evidently on the best of terms, yet she spoke lightly of the circumstances which had darkened his life. The girl accounted for it to herself by supposing that Laura's nature was really, as she had said, a little prosaic, and that she was actually repelled by the tragic poetry of his love and loss. No doubt it seemed to her absurd and overstrained. Adam Lauriston himself would have explained any lack of sympathy in Laura in precisely the same way. In truth, however, there was a more definite and special reason for this coldness. There had been a time, a good many years earlier, when Laura Lauriston had really liked her cousin Adam, and had determined, with a clear sense of what would be for his good, to accept him as soon as he should ask her. It was not without an effort that she forgave him when he failed to give her the opportunity. And though she did forgive him, and, what was more, fell very sincerely in love with Herbert Latham, there was not much sweetness in her pardon. Some women can shape the past as they please for their own contemplation, and would soon have been sure that an unrevealed love had never existed; but Laura was too honest and clear-sighted for that. She recognised the fact of her former aspiration and Adam's unconscious rejection; she bore no malice, she wished him nothing but good; but, in her turn, she rejected any claim that his sorrow made on her womanly tenderness. They were excellent friends, nevertheless. Up to a certain point she understood Adam much better than most people did, and, though she did not flatter herself that she possessed any influence over him, she knew very well that she was a favourite of his. When Herbert Latham died, Adam interested himself in the arrangement of his affairs, and the widow suspected, if she did not actually know, how much she was

indebted to her cousin's interposition for the satisfactory result. She was not ungrateful; she appreciated his kindness, but she could not help it if her heart was somewhat chilled and deadened where that possibility of warmer feeling had been buried.

When Mr. Lauriston arrived that evening Laura encountered him with a business-like face, and a pen in her hand. "I can't be disturbed," she said. "I'm writing to a dozen of my dearest friends, to tell them where we are going."

"How very foolish of you! Why, they may take advantage of it and write to you! You should only whisper such matters to a discreet person like myself."

"I should not be overwhelmed with home news under those circumstances, should I? I know what your notes are like."

"But may I be told of your wanderings as well as the happy dozen?" he inquired.

"Yes, certainly; only I can't talk to you now."

"Very good," said Adam resignedly. "Does that mean that I am to go away, or only to hold my tongue?"

"You needn't do either," she replied. "It means that you may amuse Miss Conway, who hasn't got any letters to write."

He followed the direction of her eyes, and saw Rachel sitting near the window at the further end of the room, beyond the folding-doors. She had a book in her hand, but she had looked up at the sound of his entrance.

"Miss Conway is a sensible woman," he remarked, as he leisurely crossed the floor.

"Because she has nothing better to do than to listen to you?" Mrs. Latham inquired, going back to her desk.

"I don't yet know that Miss Conway will listen to me," he replied. "I would call her attention to the fact that my remark was made first."

"After that she has no choice!" said his cousin, dipping her pen into the ink, and dashing off the date of another letter.

Miss Conway greeted the new-comer with a glance and a slight smile, which, if hardly warm enough to be called a welcome, yet expressed a contented acquiescence in his presence. He looked deliberately round, selected a chair, placed it with extreme precision exactly where he wished to sit, and finally settled himself in it. Rachel silently watched this elaborate performance, and her smile became somewhat more marked.

"My cousin is a good correspondent," said Mr. Lauriston, "and her dearest friends are numerous. Unless you banish me, Miss Conway, I am here for some time."

"I don't want to banish you," she said. It was true. She had once desired to escape from Mr. Lauriston; but that was in the park at Redlands, when she still dreamed of escaping from the fears which his comprehension seemed to intensify. Now that she had accepted the fear as

an integral part of her life, she accepted his presence too, and found pleasure in it. Her perplexities concerning him troubled her only in his absence. When he was with her, she did not question herself as to his thoughts and feelings; she simply liked to hear his voice with its delicate distinctness of utterance, and was pleased with the quick glances, which, as it were, flew to meet her half-spoken words. Mr. Lauriston was not precisely a handsome man. He was too slight and small to be a type of masculine beauty; yet it was possible to admire in him a grace of attitude and movement, and to find in his face a fascinating hint of deep if uncertain meaning. His eyes and smile, insignificant perhaps in the full glare of a commonplace day, might have lightened the shadowy darkness of an old picture. Rachel, with all that Mrs. Latham had said about the beautiful Mrs. Lauriston still fresh in her mind, looked at him that evening with revived and wondering interest, as she said, "I don't want to banish you."

"Thank you very much," he replied, and was silent for a moment, observing her with his usual keenness. "So your preparations are all made?" he said.

"Yes. They did not take much time. The most difficult thing I had to do was to remember that I was not to do anything."

"Laura undertook all the management?"

"Oh, of course she manages everything. But that isn't all. I have got a maid, and it seems that one of us is bound to be idle."

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "Well, at this present time I should say the idleness would probably be very bad for the maid, and will certainly be very good for you."

"I seem likely to try it," said Rachel, looking down at her hands which lay loosely folded in her lap. "But am I to be utterly idle?"

"Read," he suggested. "Not just now, but when I am out of the way; and, by the bye, I remember you once spoke of picture-seeing as a delight; you can see pictures now."

"Yes, I suppose I can. There's nothing to hinder me, is there? But I wonder where the delight is!" she added in a voice which was hardly above a whisper.

"You will find it."

It occurred to Rachel that perhaps he had found that delight springing up afresh, after the flood of sorrow which had swept so much away. "You care for all that?" she questioned.

"Yes," he said. "That is something to care for always."

"Perhaps," she answered doubtfully. There was a long pause, during which they could hear Mrs. Latham as she turned a leaf, or pulled open the drawer of her writing-table to find an envelope. She was evidently dealing vigorously with her correspondence.

Miss Conway suddenly raised her eyes, and looked at her companion with something of hesitation in her glance. He answered the mute question with a smile.

"Mr. Lauriston," she said, clasping and unclasping her hands; "to-day, when I was out with Mrs. Latham, I saw Effie."

"Effie Eastwood?"

"Yes, my dear little Effie! She wouldn't speak to me; she turned her head away; she wouldn't look at me; she dragged Fanny off. *She's* true to Charley. Fanny thought I was a fine lady; she would have spoken; I know I could have made Fanny speak to me if I had cared to try. But not Effie! I was proud of her to-day." Rachel announced the fact of her pride in tremulous tones, and looked hurriedly out of the window, because her eyes were filling as she spoke.

"You were always fond of Effie, weren't you?" said Mr. Lauriston.

"Yes, always." Rachel made a great effort to control herself. "She was such a poor home-sick little child when she came to school, and she took such a fancy to me. I remember how she told me about her brother Charley the very first night, and cried herself to sleep. She soon got over her troubles, though, and then she was generally in mischief from morning to night."

"That's more as I remember her," said Mr. Lauriston. "She was a small person who liked her own way, and would get it if she could, very prettily."

"Somehow I don't think you saw the best of Effie," said Rachel.

"I don't know, I'm sure. What I saw was very coquettish and quaint."

"Or else you didn't think the best of her."

"Perhaps not," he assented, remembering, as he spoke, how contemptuous his liking for little Effie had been.

"Well, I suppose I shall never see her any more. That is all over," Rachel said. "I had a letter from Mrs. Eastwood, partly reproaching me, and partly begging me to be good to Charley. It hurt me so to read it, I burnt it. I didn't think she would ever write such cruel things to me. And if she believed that I was like that—that I had given him up because I was rich—how could she want me to be her daughter still? She ought to have scorned me as Effie does."

"People say a little more than they really mean sometimes," he suggested.

"Well, it is all over," Rachel repeated. "Mr. Lauriston, I shan't bother you any more for some little time to come."

"If you choose to put it so, I'm afraid you won't."

"So I am going to ask you a question now. There's no one else in the world I can ask. Will you tell me honestly whether you think I have done right?"

"In what way?"

"In giving up everything, in determining to live alone always?" She spoke in a low voice, but with the most direct and simple frankness.

He looked hard at her, drawing a long breath. "Well—yes," he said.

She slightly bent her head, as if accepting the sentence without appeal, and sat turning his ring on her finger. "I think so, as you know," she said. "Why do you think so?" There was a slight stress on the 'you.'

"Well," he said, "you would not be quite as noble as I think you, if you were willing to run the risk of inflicting your suffering on others."

"But," Miss Conway persisted, "if I understand what you think—I'm not sure that I do—why should I sacrifice everything for that?"

"Life wouldn't be tolerable with a defaced and lowered ideal," he said. "You would soon find that out."

"But one is always falling short of one's ideal."

"Oh, but that's different. My ideal life might include early rising," said Mr. Lauriston with a smile. "I may lie in bed to-day while I think how magnificently I will realise it to-morrow. But the fatal thing is to put it out of your power, once for all, to realise your ideal perfection, to doom yourself to live on a lower level. You have refused to do that."

"After all, I seem to be referring the whole matter to myself," Rachel said in a dissatisfied tone.

"Some people say that selfishness is at the bottom of everything," Mr. Lauriston replied.

"But you don't believe that!"

"Oh, I don't know. If it is, it doesn't matter."

"Not matter!" she repeated.

"No, not a bit. Nothing can be very bad that is made wide enough to take in everything. If any one spoke ill of a friend of yours, how you would resent it! But we may all speak ill of mankind in general, if we can do it neatly."

"I don't like it though," said Rachel, "and it isn't the same thing."

"No, it isn't," he agreed. "But let selfishness be the root of everything, I needn't worry myself with digging it up and laying it bare. I shall go my way, merely remarking that I'm not afraid of a selfishness which blossoms into love and friendship, honour and trust, and all manner of pretty things."

Rachel was silent. "Adam!" Mrs. Latham called from the further room, "would you light my candle for me? It is really quite dusk. I'm getting on," she said cheerfully as he approached. "I've only four more to write."

"How many of these dear people do you secretly wish at the bottom of the sea?" he inquired, pausing, before he went back, to survey the pile of square notes.

"Why, none—at least only one or two. I *could* do without old Miss Polhill, for instance."

"So I should imagine," said Mr. Lauriston.

"You and Miss Conway must be in the dark too," said Laura,

looking out an address. "There are some candles on the chimney-piece there, or you can ring for the lamp."

"Oh, we don't want the lamp to talk by," he said; and, returning to Rachel, he lighted the candles. The light shone on his pale face, and showed hers against the dusky folds of the curtain like a cameo profile.

"Miss Conway," he said, leaning with folded arms on the back of a chair near her, and speaking very softly, "when we talk, you and I, we sail along smoothly enough for a time, and then we come to a rock on which we invariably strike. We have struck on it again. You are going away with a very heavy heart, I'm afraid, and I can do nothing to lighten it—nothing. But, after all, what do you or I know of Fate? What can the wisest of us say of the future more than 'It may be'? And why may not that as well be hopeful as sad?"

Rachel sighed. She was young enough for hopelessness to seem a thing incredible, and she looked up at Mr. Lauriston with something of faint appeal in her glance. It seemed to say that if he could point to any brightness, however remote, there was yet that alive within her soul which would leap up in answer, ready to follow through the world. But her questioning eyes met only his look of sympathy, and the slight half-shrug of his shoulders which expressed his helplessness.

Still leaning on the chair he moved a little, so that his face was in the shadow as he went on. "We all have our opinions, of course, according to health, temperament, money matters, the state of the weather, or anything else you please. But what are our opinions worth? Why should mine trouble you? or, if they were different, why should mine encourage you?"

Still she was silent. If he had uttered blunt words of denial, or if he had lived a cold, prosaic, matter-of-fact life, she might have revolted and perhaps found a hope for herself. He would have left a whole side of her soul untouched. But his sympathy had touched her most secret feelings, and she drooped at the soft touch of an "It may be," which seemed to embrace all in its uncertainty.

"Life may be better than you think," he said again. "You hardly know your own capabilities of enjoyment yet. You must not look back."

She lifted her head at last. "Am I to look forward, Mr. Lauriston?"

He hesitated. "If you will look for what is beautiful, each day may bring you something," he said.

Adam Lauriston would have laughed at the idea of his guiding any one through the dim and perplexed ways of life, but he was ready to give a hand to a fellow wanderer, and, if it pleased her, to beguile the journey with speculations and comments. As he stood there he thoughtfully stroked his lip, considering the matter.

"Mr. Lauriston," said Rachel, "I think you had better not try to console me. I wonder if you know how sad your consolations sound."

He stood up instantly. "Was I trying to console you?" he said. "Well, perhaps I was. I ought to have known better."

"It is very kind of you," she began.

"Oh, no," he said, "that's not the right way to look at it." He sat down, smiling a little. "There is a man who has compiled a book of consolation, did you know? I never saw it, but I heard of it just lately. There is a little of everything and everybody in it, I fancy—Jeremy Taylor, and Mr. Spurgeon, and ever so many more."

"I never heard of it," said Rachel.

"No? I don't know whether that kind of thing has been done before, but it struck me as a magnificent idea, for the compiler. Happy man! he can face all his suffering friends with a sympathetic glance, and a low-toned inquiry, 'Did you ever see my little book?' Then he can bow himself out, and send a copy."

"What a pity you didn't think of it!"

Mr. Lauriston appeared to be interested in the pattern of the rug. "Some people have no luck," he said.

"You look at it entirely from the consoler's point of view," Rachel continued after a pause.

He raised his head. "Well," he said, "and who else is consoled by all the consolations that ever were spoken?"

She did not answer, and Mr. Lauriston silently pursued a familiar train of thought. The ordinary formulas of comfort he held to be worse than useless to the sufferer, but then he maintained that they were not really meant for him. There are plenty of amiable people who are pained by the sight of anguish, and this sympathetic suffering is soothed by the sound of their own voices breathing words of hope and encouragement into the empty air. They irradiate the miserable man with a flood of rose-coloured light, and find him pleasanter to look at, though he may have the blackness of utter night within his soul.

"Well," said Miss Conway at last, "you couldn't have compiled a book of consolation if you don't believe in any." He looked at her, but did not speak. "You don't, do you? Surely you said so just now."

"Not exactly that," he replied.

"Then I misunderstood you. Well, what would you put in your book?"

"Only one word."

"And that word would be?"

Mr. Lauriston spread his hands for a moment in a gesture of deprecation, then suffered them to fall. "Ah!" he said, "don't ask me that!"

"But if I do ask you?"

"I shall tell you; you will feel yourself insulted. It will not be my fault in the slightest degree. You will know that, and, as you are very kind, you will probably pardon me."

"Tell me your one word."

"Time," said Mr. Lauriston.

"Time!" She repeated it scornfully. "There are facts that Time cannot alter. You must know that as well as I do."

"Yes. But it may alter you."

"You mean that I shall forget all that I have lost—*forget it!* Well, I don't think so, Mr. Lauriston."

"Why should you think so? I never supposed you would. And yet you will forget much; we all do."

Rachel did not answer. She bent her head a little, and by a slight movement of her shoulders she expressed opposition.

"You may become accustomed to much that now seems like an intolerable discord in your life, possibly may learn to bring your life into harmony with it. Perhaps it may be a somewhat melancholy harmony, it does not follow that it will not be beautiful. I think myself," he added after a pause, "that it will be beautiful."

She made a little negative sign. "I don't think so," she said. "And how soon do you expect all this to happen?"

"Ah! that I cannot tell."

"In a year?" she persisted, still with a touch of scorn.

He smiled. "No, no; you shall not force me to insult you."

"But say something. In two years?"

"No; I will not say in two years. That is too short and too definite; you can sum it up too clearly in 'this year,' and 'last year.' There should be a certain lapse of time, something vague in the way of summers and winters and changing scenes. Time does not work till we have ceased to watch him. Then he does wonders."

Miss Conway looked at him, and seemed to listen to these generalities. But when he paused she pressed him to fix a time, exactly as if he had not spoken. Her persistence might have been a pretty wilfulness, but for the bitter sadness underlying it. He, facing her, remembered the story of an earlier Rachel, with its seven years of happy patience; a story too unsuited to his lips, and to her destiny, for him even to hint at that mystic number.

"Three years? Four years?" urged the girlish voice, with its accent of unbelief. "Come, Mr. Lauriston; in four years?" The words, as she uttered them, seemed to lengthen into an eternity.

"Well," he said, accepting the challenge, "in four years you will see things very differently."

"And, as facts do not change, that means that in four years I shall forget. You haven't much faith in the depth of my sentiments." The four years which a moment earlier had been so long, dwindled to contemptible brevity as she touched them thus in her wayward humour.

"Why did you make me talk of time?" he retorted. "Didn't I tell you you wouldn't like it? But, since you will have it—yes, in four years you will be changed in many ways."

She leaned back with a downcast gaze, she seemed to meditate before she spoke. "And will you change, too?" she said.

"I? Oh, no!" he answered earnestly, in a low voice. "No; you may be sure——"

Rachel looked at him, he met her eyes, and suddenly began to laugh. "Miss Conway," he said, "I see why my one attempt at consolation is not as soothing as I could wish. I will thank you not to insult me by supposing that I can change. Other people change, naturally, just as other people die, but, 'Mourir soi-même, c'est un peu fort.' That man was quite right. No; I shall not change."

"I don't think you will," she answered.

Mr. Lauriston still had his smile on his lips when Mrs. Latham suddenly appeared within their little space of candlelight. "You seem merry," she said.

"Very," her cousin replied, alertly rising to offer her a chair. "You have finished your letters?"

"Yes. What a hot, heavy night it is!" She looked at Rachel. "I shall be glad to get away to-morrow; shall not you?"

The girl nodded and smiled. "I suppose there is a breath of air somewhere in the world," she said. "It feels rather as if it were quite dead to-night. But I dare say a little time will set it all right." She turned her head and looked at Mr. Lauriston.

"I trust so," he answered gravely.

"Well, I don't mind how dead it is till we are safely across the Channel," said the practical Laura. "Now, Adam, if you want to know our route, I will tell you. You had better put the places down, and the dates, and then if you like to write you can. But I won't expect it," she added generously.

He wrote from her dictation in his pocket-book, but, as he did so, his thoughts were dwelling on the longer journey which Rachel Conway was about to take, and which, in four years, would land her—where? Nearer to him where he stood? But no years could bridge an impassable gulf. And if not nearer, then how far she might have travelled from him in four years' time!

CHAPTER XI.

AFTER FOUR YEARS.

IF Rachel Conway had kept a diary, she would, no doubt, have noted the date of her talk with Mr. Lauriston, and remembered his prediction. But, as she kept no record of the fact, she forgot all about it long before the four years had gone by, and the anniversary had passed unheeded. Perhaps there could have been no better proof of the change which he had foretold. And yet, of course, there was no particular reason why she should remember the day on which Mr. Lauriston said "Yes" when she asked him if she had done right. If he thought of it, he made no sign which could remind her.

This space of time had not been marked in Rachel's life by any outward event of any especial importance. Charles Eastwood might plausibly have asserted that his life had held a far greater change, since before the time had expired he had been two years married. But Rachel was living quietly with Mrs. Latham, with no anticipation of any approaching difference, except such as must be inevitably produced by the lapse of years. When she saw the announcement of Charley's marriage she felt a sudden undefinable shock, which was really a confused awakening from a forgetfulness too complete to be credible even to herself. It seemed to her that the news had a great effect upon her. She gazed with a startled face at the printed words, as if they might be a message from another world, and found it impossible to speak, even though she was conscious that silence might be misunderstood.

So Charles Eastwood was married in the second August after their parting. And, earlier still, Miss Whitney had made the great change of all, from the known to the unknown. She had persisted in going out on Ash Wednesday, in spite of bitter wind and driving snow, and had caught a cold which proved fatal. Rachel had been sent for, and had found the sad little house in a state of mournful yet decorous excitement, with the clergyman and the doctor paying frequent visits, and a cousin of Miss Whitney's, so like her that she might have been her twin sister, established by the bedside. Rachel stayed with her mother's friend to the last, and her heart ached strangely when the end came. She held the hand whose slight, chilly pressure was a familiar memory; she felt it relax unresponsively and grow cold in her warm clasp; and it seemed to her as if her girlhood, with its pale, monotonous, yet hopeful days, died once more with Miss Whitney. She remained for the funeral, conforming to all the rigid rules of the little household; rules which, under the care of the cousin and the old servants, lived on though Miss Whitney was dead. Rachel never set foot outside the front door, nor dared so much as to peep at the street from one of the darkened windows. She had the room in which she used to sleep as a child, she rose punctually in the morning, and came down to breakfast to the minute, feeling as if she should show a lack of respect to Miss Whitney if she did otherwise under that roof. She contented herself with the somewhat severe attendance of Mary, Miss Whitney's maid, who remembered Miss Rachel as a little girl who was to be taught tidy and ladylike ways. And she was unconscious that all the time her presence in the house ennobled its sadness, and gave grief a larger and sweet expression. Rachel, a woman grown, wrapped in her furs, walked slowly by the crocus-edged borders in the long, narrow garden, and gathered little memories of the old days when she was sent out there to play. She almost expected to see her childish self, in a neat pinafore and a garden hat, step out from behind the evergreens with a meditative air, and she whimsically fancied that she should hurry to that little self, to take her in her arms and comfort her, since she alone knew what that silent child had suffered. She stood musingly opposite the western

wall, which shut out all possibility of watching the setting sun, and saw the March day die with a faint pink flush high in the heavens, as she had seen it so often when she dreamed, with a child's impatient longing, of the sunset burning and fading behind the dull row of bricks. Now as she faced it, glancing upward at the leafless poplars which stood over it like sentinels, she considered that if it could fall suddenly, like the ramparts of Jericho, it was probable that the wall of Mr. Wilson's yard might rather interfere with the glory. (Mr. Wilson was the wheelwright who lived next door, and his house, standing further back than Miss Whitney's, hid the coveted view from her upper windows.) "One would see more, no doubt," said Rachel to herself, "but how much more?" The child had dreamed of a far horizon, with crimson splendours glowing between the poplar stems; the woman stood with a faint smile on her lips, wondering what the reality would be. "Two or three carts, perhaps, and possibly a water-butt." Yet the wall had a fascination for her still, and she lingered till the sound of an opening door made her turn hastily to see the cousin shivering on the threshold, with a shawl of Miss Whitney's thrown over her head. "My dear Miss Conway," she said, "excuse me, but it is not prudent to stand about in this bleak March air. If you are not inclined for brisk exercise, I should really advise you to come indoors." Rachel thanked her, and promised to take only a turn or two more. The pink light was fading overhead. She felt, as she walked quickly along the path, as she remembered to have felt when she was a child. "This sunset is gone for ever," she thought, "and I can never know what it was like!"

She stopped behind the trunk of the walnut tree, where she hoped the cousin would not see her loitering, and had a last look at the familiar scene, at the roofs and gables, which she had gazed at for months and years, in sunlight and shadow, till they were stamped on her memory, to rise up, uncalled for, as her idea of the typical town; at the church tower, a squat and clumsy building which she had once believed to be a model of venerable beauty; at the apple trees, leaning from a neighbour's ampler garden; at the shrubs and plants around her, and even at a visionary undergrowth of all the flowers that had ever blossomed there. And having said goodbye to all, she went indoors, and meekly helped the cousin to put some folds of crape on a black gown, which would do very well to wear about the house in the morning.

Miss Whitney's little property was divided with strict impartiality among her relations. Rachel, just as a remembrance, had a ring and two brooches out of the spinster's meagre treasures, and, as she handled them, she remembered how they used to be shown to her now and then, when she was an admiring and respectful little girl. She packed up her legacy and went back to her own house, which seemed delightfully full of warmth, and firelight, and luxury. "Well?" said Laura, drawing the easiest chair forward. "Sit down, and have a cup of tea."

Rachel sat down, put her feet on the fender (a thing Miss Whitney

never permitted), and looked thoughtfully at the blazing logs. "Well," she said, "I told you all about it when I wrote. I've not been doing anything this last week, of course. There were a good many people at the funeral, and most of the tradesmen put up their shutters; you see she had lived there so many years."

"Of course," said Mrs. Latham, taking possession of the girl's hands, and gently unbuttoning her gloves.

"I shouldn't like to live there," Rachel continued. "It seemed to me as if everything had grown smaller, and greyer, and drearier than I recollected it. And yet somehow I felt very homeless when I got into the train to come away."

"But you mustn't feel homeless," Mrs. Latham retorted. "I want you to feel as if this were your home. It seems very homelike to me."

Rachel uttered a word of thanks, and, stooping, kissed her companion's forehead. It was the nearest approach they had ever made to anything sentimental.

Even at that time Rachel was greatly changed. At twenty-two, partly owing to her secluded life, but partly also to a natural slowness of development, she was younger than many girls of eighteen. At twenty-four she was in some respects older than her age. At first she was rather shy and silent when she went about with Mrs. Latham. It was never an awkward shyness; it was more like a delicate reserve. And her silence was the serene silence of one who as yet hardly knew the language of those around her, and was in no haste to speak. She looked and listened as if she were translating what she saw and heard into some language of her own. Later, when she had grown more accustomed to her surroundings, she spoke readily and simply enough, yet people found her peculiar in an undefinable way. With a strong desire to merge her own individuality in the great tide of humanity, Rachel yet moved among her fellows as one unavoidably apart. To most of us the certainty that we can no longer act romances, but only look at them from the outside, comes gradually; there are little thrills of sentiment, wonder, and hope, in many a middle-aged heart, and it is hard to say precisely when possibilities are over. But to Rachel the severance between the two positions had been almost unbearably sudden. Into a life which even to middle age might seem grey and hopeless in its isolation, she carried all the awakening wonder and freshness of her youth. The time had passed when she could see nothing but the sadness of her doom, and the loneliness of the far-reaching years. As Adam Lauriston had foretold, each day brought some new delight in beauty. She travelled, and dim names in the pages of books were transformed into actual mountains and lakes, streets and houses, churches and picture galleries. Flowers in other lands made all her memories fragrant. Stars, having looked with her on the hushed and shadowy loveliness of city or landscape, became themselves more beautiful for such remembrance. She might be far away from the fair vision, but they in their

heavens beheld it still. And in all her wanderings she was young enough to say to herself, "I will come again."

From these journeys she returned with Laura to her London home. Mr. Lauriston's cautious estimate of her inheritance, when she questioned him as they sat by the edge of the cliff, had proved very much below the mark; and Rachel, without a relation in the world, and with all anticipation of closer interests cut away from her life, found herself in possession of abundant means. She was not unmindful of less personal claims upon her wealth. She gave generously—it was her nature to deal nobly with all that belonged to her—but she withdrew as much as possible from all knowledge of the recipients of her bounty. She gave, as it were, with averted eyes, turning from the black gulfs in which poor wretches struggled in want and suffering, as a dizzy traveller might turn from a precipice. She dared not trust herself to look on the cruelty and anguish of the world. It seemed to her that its pulses throbbed with too quick and terrible a life, and that only in stillness, and grace, and beauty, could she find safety and healing. And having given in this impersonal fashion, she had yet enough to amply gratify the tastes which day by day grew more fastidiously delicate. She never knew how much she had gained in this respect from Mr. Lauriston. Even in her first ignorance, if he were present, she seemed to see with his eyes, and the merest glance or word sufficed to direct her to the sources of his pleasure. There was no consciousness of teaching on his part, nor of learning on hers; it was simply similarity of feeling, with, in his case, priority of cultivation and opportunity. Following in his steps, Rachel began, at first a little doubtfully, but afterwards with delighted confidence, to look for such adornments for her home as should best express her sense of what was beautiful and right. The result was not precisely fashionable, since her tastes were too varied to be comprised in a fashion. It might even have been called confused; but at any rate it was a beautiful confusion, and Rachel herself seemed to dominate and harmonise the whole. Her dress was invariably characterised by great simplicity of style, and by a preference for colours dusky and almost sombre in their richness, but which might have glowed in splendour under an intenser light. To these soft, deeply-hued stuffs a jewel would sometimes lend its touch of imprisoned fire. Thus clad, Rachel, moving through her big rooms with all her treasures and luxuries about her—

"Des bronzes, des cristaux, et des senteurs d'Asie"—

was curiously unlike the slim, silent girl in Miss Whitney's little drab-painted house, where a handful of primroses in a glass on the side table, or a few summer flowers, carefully arranged to match as nearly as nature would permit, in a pair of vases on the chimney-piece, supplied what they could of poetry and perfume.

She was so unlike, that by the time the four years were over, and Miss Whitney's death and Charles Eastwood's marriage had alike

receded into the past, she sometimes felt as if she had actually lived two lives. Everything connected with her girlhood was distinct and clear in her memory, but it seemed to her that either that, or her present existence, must be a vivid dream. Occasionally, even among her friends, this curious perplexity of a double life would suddenly present itself to her mind, and she would sit with her brows drawn down, and her lips set, while the voices around her grew strange in her ears. Out of these brief fits of absence she would come in no haste or confusion, but turning her clear eyes on the outward world as if she recognised it again after looking on some other world at least as real. At such times, in very truth, she was trying to assure herself that the things about her were not fancies. There was always something dream-like in this later life of hers. She enjoyed it, she found it a brilliant and variegated spectacle, she had swarms of acquaintances who amused and charmed her, yet she felt as if there were a barrier between these people and herself, as if she saw them through glass, and could neither touch them, nor so much as draw a breath of the air they breathed. Day by day they hurried past her in a many-coloured crowd, jostling each other, laughing, talking, clasping hands, loving, marrying—and then the night came with its lonely thoughts and black, silent hours. The mad Rutherfords haunted her still—a crew of grotesque, fantastic, irresponsible beings, reaching out hands from the past to grasp her. They could not be otherwise than hateful, since she knew nothing of them but their madness. She was conscious of them sometimes when she went into society; and as she laid her hand on the sleeve of some unsuspecting man who was about to take her in to dinner, there would be a hint of tremulous laughter about her mouth at the thought of his intrusion into this ghostly company. The Rutherfords were not the less terrible because she laughed. It is poor work to laugh at lifeless fancies, and Rachel's laughter was much more akin to the mockery of the Middle Ages, perilously jesting with the devil.

Sometimes, it is true, remembrance came in a less alarming form when Mr. Lauriston appeared among her guests. Four years had not changed him as they had changed her. He hardly looked even four years older, though he might be a little graver; not that his smiles were less frequent, but that he seemed to draw back into the shadows more completely when he was not smiling. The tradition of his beautiful wife and his broken heart clung about him more closely as time went on. Women ceased to think about marrying Adam Lauriston, and women who did not want to marry him were charmed with his romantic constancy. He never said or did anything to prove or disprove it, but nothing short of a second marriage would have affected the general belief. If he shrugged his shoulders, it was evident that he scorned the world which held her no longer. If he never spoke of her, plainly his passion was too deep for words. If he had chosen to dance in the Lauristons' family vault, where she was laid, there would have been no doubt that grief for her death had driven him mad. Before the four years were

past he might have paid what attention he pleased to Miss Conway without attracting any notice. People assumed that it was natural that he should be often at Mrs. Latham's house, since she was his cousin and had known his wife.

In point of fact, however, Mr. Lauriston used his right of entry but sparingly. As time went by, and Miss Conway's friends became more numerous, he stood in the background, looking on with his bright, watchful eyes. She had become the centre of a group. The days when she contrasted him with Charles Eastwood had passed. Now there were other men who amused and interested her, who could say things quaint, daring, impressive, unexpected, charming. Their talk pleased her precisely because it banished the brooding thought which found its incarnation in Mr. Lauriston. She had fancied that when he became a part of her everyday life, coming and going in his cousin's house as a matter of course, their friendship would naturally become easy and unstrained. But, in point of fact, the bond which held them together was too close for such intercourse. When he walked into the room, she remembered all that she most desired to forget. If he sat down by her, and spoke of the topics of the day, she exerted herself to answer him brightly and quickly, feeling as if they two were acting a charade, and it was needful their parts should be cleverly supported for the amusement of the audience. Something in her glance would say, "You and I know what is underneath all this." And even in matters of taste, when she began to talk to men who had painted pictures and written poems, she cared less to ascertain that Mr. Lauriston's judgment was in all respects the same as her own. He became more and more exclusively the man who knew her secret fear, and who had given her his promise and his ring by the edge of the cliff. Rachel had grown superstitious about that ring, and would on no account have drawn it off her finger. If her fear should ever be realised, all her bright holiday friends would vanish instantly, but the black ring assured her that she would find Mr. Lauriston in the shadows. She was very certain of that. It happened now and then that she would wake at night with her childish agony of nameless dread oppressing her almost to suffocation, and at such moments she would think instinctively of Mr. Lauriston, before she knew what her fear was, or what he could do to help her. The worst was always over when she was sufficiently awake to smile at her foolish faith in him.

From Fish to Reptile.

UNDER my eyes here, in the muddy pond on Hole Common, a miracle is this moment taking place in the open air, without any dark-room *séance* or mystical hocus-pocus, compared with which Mr. Home's levitation or Dr. Slade's spirit-writing is mere clumsy conjuring and inconclusive sleight of hand. Why people will refuse to believe in the possibility of evolution, when they can see it thus taking place any day in broad daylight before their own faces, surpasses my poor limited comprehension. Is it so incredible that a lizard should by long ages of change have grown at last into a bird, when we ourselves can watch a crawling caterpillar growing in less than three weeks into a beautiful feathery-winged butterfly? Is it so incredible that an ancestral donkey should gradually develop by slow increments into a modern horse, when we ourselves can watch a fixed and rooted polyp throwing off buds from its own body to form a free and locomotive jelly-fish? Or is it so incredible that some primæval mammal should be ultimately descended from a fish-like progenitor, when we ourselves can watch, here on Hole Common, a gill-breathing, limbless, aquatic tadpole, developing by rapid steps into so different a creature as a four-legged, air-breathing, terrestrial frog? How can we deny that these other things may well have been, when we know that these active little jumping frogs on the bank here have each positively grown out of the small, shapeless, darting mud fish we see swimming about in the pond below? Look at it how we will, a miracle it is in all sobriety of speech; and if the creature which exhibited it had just been brought for the first time from Central Africa or the Australian Bush, we should all be rushing off excitedly to the Brighton Aquarium to see this strange animal which positively changes from a perfect fish to a perfect terrestrial quadruped before our very faces. What a triumph for the evolutionists we should all consider it! and what a sensation its arrival would produce! We should be as much astonished as if a lizard were discovered in South America which gradually put forth a crop of feathers, developed a beak and a pair of pinions, and finally turned into a full-fledged pigeon. But as it is nothing more than a common English amphibian, we turn away from the familiar miracle wholly unconcerned, and say with a yawn to one another, "Why, it's only a tadpole."

Scientific writers generally know so very much themselves that they have clean forgotten what are the sort of difficulties that beset the likes of you and me in our endeavours to comprehend the process of things in the

organic world. They are so accustomed to look at plants and animals from the point of view of structure and classification, that they quite overlook the obvious and external differences of shape and appearance and colour, which form the only objects of interest in the plant or the animal to ninety-nine out of a hundred among their human fellow-creatures. They are so absorbed in the homologies of the skeleton that they forget to say anything about the flesh and blood; they are so deeply interested in the monocotyledonous seed that they forget to mention the leaves and the flower. Now of course for any real scientific reconstruction of the past history of any organism, these purely structural points are of the highest importance. Without them, it is impossible to arrive at any true or useful conclusion. The real underlying difficulty about the evolution of birds, for example, does not lie in any question about their feathers, or their wings, or their bills, but in certain unsolved internal problems of bones and vital organs. The real underlying difficulty about the evolution of the elephant does not lie in his trunk, his tusks, or his gigantic size, but in certain small points of his bony structure. Accordingly, scientific expositions of the evolution theory usually give us a great many pretty pictures and diagrams of sternums, and coracoids, and upper epibranchials, and other nice things with nice names to correspond; while they seldom give us a single word about the bird's feathers, or the elephant's trunk, or the horse's mane, which are the objects that strike everybody's eye, and that everybody wants to have explained to him. In short, the ordinary scientific writer cannot be made to understand that we don't want bones and organs, but real live birds, beasts, fishes, and reptiles. The scientific man is clearly right, of course, and we are just as clearly wrong; but such is the perversity of human nature that we shall probably always continue in our evil courses, and never take that lively personal interest in orbitosphenoids which is properly expected of us—no, not if we live to be as old as Methuselah.

Suppose, accordingly, we sit down quietly here by the side of Hole Pond, and, with the living tadpoles before us for a text, we just try to reconstruct ideally so much of the pedigree which links reptiles with fish as we can arrive at without once cutting up an unfortunate tadpole, even mentally. For the most curious part of it all is this, that the great gulfs which appal the ordinary mind are to the scientific thinker no gulfs at all; while the bones and the internal organs which we so carelessly disregard are the real crux of the whole discussion. The origin of the elephant's trunk, a man of science will tell you, is obviously a mere bit of functional adaptation; so is the origin of bright petals in flowers, of pulpy fruits, of beautiful plumage, of tall antlers. All these things are so simple that he never troubles his head for a moment about them. And consequently the poor outsider looks upon them usually as insoluble problems, which all the resources of science are powerless to attack. Whereas in reality the very questions which interest every one of us on

the first blush are also the ones to which evolutionism offers the simplest, easiest, and most satisfactory answers.

It is well to begin at the beginning; and indeed, in order to trace the development of reptiles from fish, it is necessary first to look at the very earliest form of fish known to us. Many people imagine that if evolution be true the highest fish will resemble the lowest reptile; the highest reptile the lowest bird; and the highest bird the lowest mammal. But this is really a most mistaken idea. For as a rule each great class branches off from the classes beneath it at a very low point indeed. It is while a group of animals is still young and plastic that it buds out on every side into new and diversified forms. Each specialisation in any one direction naturally hinders specialisation in other directions; and so the true arrangement of animals is not linear, but rather divides and sub-divides like the branches and twigs of a great and spreading tree. The lowest types of each class most closely resemble one another; while the highest types present the greatest diversities from one another. Hence, in order to get at the real relationship between any two groups of animals, it is almost always necessary to go back to the very earliest common ancestor whom we can discover. And in the case of fishes and reptiles, this earliest common ancestor is best represented amongst modern animals by that very primitive little vertebrate, the lancelet, or amphioxus.

It is usual to describe amphioxus as a vertebrate, because it remotely resembles other vertebrates in the most important points of general structure; but as far as the fitness of language goes, the name is rather a misnomer, for amphioxus is really a vertebrate without any vertebrae—a boneless and heartless insignificant little sand-worm. Nobody but a naturalist would ever describe it as a fish at all, for it has no apparent head, no eyes, no mouth to speak of, no teeth, no backbone, and no shape worth mentioning. It is a small transparent worm-like creature, about three inches long, quite cosmopolitan in its habits, and found in all countries, from England to Tasmania, from China to Peru, and from Greenland's icy mountains to India's coral strand. Though not uncommon on the coasts of Britain, it is seldom noticed, partly because of its transparency, and partly because of the rapidity with which it can bury itself in the sand when disturbed. Unlike all other vertebrates, the lancelet is pointed at both ends, after the fashion of a shuttle, so that it seems to have no head and two tails. It does not possess a true skeleton, but in its place a cartilaginous pipe or notochord runs from one end of the little creature to the other, partially protecting the spinal chord. There are no ribs, no limbs, and, what is strangest of all, no skull or brain; both cartilaginous shell and spinal chord end at the head, as at the tail, in a tapering point. Indeed, the senses and organs of amphioxus, this earliest ancestor of the highest animals, are far inferior to those of most insects, or even of slugs and jelly-fish. The mouth consists of a simple ring surrounded by little waving arms or tentacles, which sweep in the food and water together; the first rudiments of eyes are repre-

sented by two tiny black spots of pigment, faintly sensitive to light or darkness ; a primitive organ of smell exists, almost invisible, where the nostrils ought to be ; and there is no organ of hearing whatsoever. As to locomotion, that is performed partly by wriggling, and partly by a sort of slightly expanded and undeveloped fin at the tail end. At the imminent risk of growing too obviously physiological, like the men of science whom I have been treating so harshly, I shall add that its blood is colourless, and that it has only a pulsating fold of its chief artery in place of a heart. A simpler little sand-worm one could hardly find ; and yet from some such form as this all the highest vertebrates are most probably developed. No wonder that Haeckel should separate it entirely from the remainder of the vertebrate classes in a distinct order of brainless animals.

Why such a very primitive little creature as this should have survived unaltered to the present day it is not difficult to understand. Early forms are always found in hole-and-corner situations, where a higher type of life would be unsuccessful ; just as a civilised man would starve or freeze to death where a Bushman or an Eskimo would manage to pick up a very tolerable livelihood. Thus the lowest mammals are burrowing or nocturnal creatures in isolated Australia, like the echidna and the ornithorhynchus ; while our own lowest forms are underground worm-hunting moles, night-prowling insectivorous hedgehogs, and little diving, water-haunting shrews. In just the same way, the amphioxus has lived on almost unchanged from an unimaginable antiquity to our own time, because in its simple habitat any higher senses or limbs are unnecessary, and competition from more developed forms need not be feared. The little transparent lancelet can hardly be seen at all on the shallow bottom ; it can bury itself at a moment's notice ; and its structure is perfectly adapted to its own primitive habits and manners. Even when you know where to look for it, and are quite sure that it is to be found in abundance, you can seldom discover one without a great deal of trouble. Eyes would be useless to the poor thing in the sand where it usually lurks, and a brain would be an unnecessary luxury for an animal that has no limbs to move, no senses to co-ordinate, and nothing on earth to think about. Somebody once asked the Veddahs of Ceylon why they never laughed. "Because," answered the guileless savages, "we never see anything to laugh at." The case is much the same with amphioxus ; he has no brain, because he would have no use for it even if he had one.

Just above the lancelet, in the direct line towards amphibians and reptiles, come the ugly class of suctorial cartilaginous fishes to which the hags and lampreys belong. These uncanny eel-like creatures are parasitic on other fish, which objectionable habit has preserved them in comparative simplicity of type to our own day ; for parasitism is just one of those special shady walks of life in which humbly organised forms usually have the advantage over higher and better types. In all

probability the hags are a very ancient family indeed; for the oldest vertebrate remains which we possess are a lot of little horny tooth-plates from the lower Silurian rocks, extremely like the small hooked denticles of our modern hag-fish. Of course, the ancestors of amphioxus could never leave any fossil remains at all, seeing that their bodies were all soft and cartilaginous; while even in the hag family, the only part hard enough for preservation is the dental plates. The whole tribe resembles the lancelet in many points of organisation, though it rises decidedly higher in the scale as regards senses and intelligence. The skeleton of the fish belonging to this class is soft and gristly; the notochord, or rudimentary backbone, has no ribs, and the animals are without limbs of any sort. But they have a skull, though a very soft one, and a brain inside it; and they have also an extremely simple and clumsy sort of heart. The suctorial fish fall into two main divisions, the hags and the lampreys, each of which has some importance of its own as a link in the chain of development towards the higher vertebrates.

The hags are unpleasant-looking oily marine fishes, with long, thin, snake-like bodies, popularly and well described by fishermen as about halfway between a worm and an eel. They admirably illustrate the portmanteau word "slithy," in the Jabberwocky poem, explained by the White Queen as a compound of "lithe" and "slimy;" for they are squirming, wriggling, sinuous things, and they secrete an incredible quantity of a disagreeable glutinous mucus, with an ancient and a fish-like smell, which makes them very unpleasant animals to handle experimentally. They are known to fishermen as "borers," from their habit of burying themselves inside the body of other fish, chiefly cod, and then devouring their unfortunate host piecemeal, till nothing is left of him but the skin and bones. The hags have a rudimentary eye, buried in the skin, and quite useless, which shows that they are descended from a slightly more advanced free swimming form, with a real external organ of vision. This hypothetical honest ancestor is now no doubt long extinct, having been killed off ages ago by the open competition of better-developed types; and as to the hags themselves, which have survived by virtue of their low parasitical ways, they have ceased to have any further need for an eye, which could not aid them much in the inside of another fish. On the other hand, they have a fully developed organ of smell, single, as in the lancelet, instead of being double as in the nostrils of higher fishes and other vertebrates; and this smell organ largely aids them, of course, in scenting out their victims, as soon as they have eaten out one cod, and are on the look-out for another eligible residence. Indeed, all hunting animals and carnivores, whatever their grade, always depend largely upon smell, and have very big olfactory lobes in their brains to direct their actions accordingly. Hags are not nice-looking creatures externally, with their naked bodies, apparently eyeless heads, and round sucking mouths; nor are their habits such as to endear them either to fish or fishermen. They do

great damage to the cod, and have no redeeming feature whatsoever. As to the mucus, I suppose that may serve to render them indigestible to the other fish whose bodies they feloniously enter, with intent to do them grievous bodily harm. At any rate, they never are so digested, and they must have some effectual protection to prevent it.

The lampreys are hardly a nicer family to deal with than the hags; but they are still interesting as a distinct link in the pedigree which leads us gradually up from amphioxus to the reptiles, and so indirectly to the birds and mammals. In external shape they are a good deal like the hags; but they undergo a metamorphosis from a larval to a full-grown form, exactly as our tadpoles here do from their fish-like stage to the adult and terrestrial frog. Now, a metamorphosis is always biologically valuable and suggestive, because it recapitulates for us, in part at least, the ancestral development, showing us the actual stages by which the animal has reached its present grade of evolution. The larvæ of the lampreys are inferior in organisation even to the hags, and very little superior to amphioxus itself. They have a round suctorial mouth without teeth; and their very small rudimentary eyes are hidden in a fold of the skin. In this condition, the young lamprey lives in rivers, and apparently fastens himself on to other creatures, whose blood he sucks as best he may. But after three or four years of such an aimless existence, carried up and down on the sides of his unwilling host, he begins to develop a set of rasping teeth; acquires a pair of fairly serviceable eyes, and turns out a mature locomotive fish, with respectable fins, and a moderately decent tail. Still, however, he keeps to his parasitic habits, using his teeth to rasp a hole in his victim's side, and never letting him go till he has killed him.

Observe that in all these cases the fish we now possess is not the exact original fish who formed an historical link in the pedigree of reptiles and mammals, but only something like him. The hags and lampreys are parasitical on higher types than themselves, which of course the ancestral fish could not have been; he could not have lived by feeding off the bodies of his own remote and more advanced descendants. Nevertheless, if we omit the functional features which belong to these low types in virtue of their parasitism, and consider only those underlying points which are general and structural, we have probably a fair picture of what the original common ancestor was really like. When the mass of the race developed to something higher, or became extinct in the competition, the forefathers of these particular creatures took to a parasitical life on the new types, and so, while specially modifying certain of their organs in adaptation to their new habits, preserved for us in the main the general peculiarities of the primitive form. That is almost always the case with such transitional links; where we have them at all, it is just in some such way, because they have accommodated themselves to some exceptional and neglected situation in the hierarchy of nature. At the same time, this fact explains the

occasional existence of such transitional forms, which would otherwise naturally have become extinct. We can thus see both why transitional forms are so often wanting, and also why in a few out-of-the-way places they still occasionally survive.

From an ancestor something like the larval lamprey, the various tribes of fishes have branched out variously in many directions, some of them towards the sharks and rays, some of them towards the cod, sole, and salmon, and some of them towards sundry other less familiar types. At the present moment, however, we are only concerned with those fish which lie as directly as possible (after this collateral fashion) in the line of descent which finally culminated in birds and mammals. For this purpose we may leave entirely on one side the vast majority of our existing species, which belong to the immense sub-class of the teleostei, or hard-boned fishes. Among these may be reckoned almost every sort of fish familiarly known to us at table or elsewhere, such as the perch, bass, mullet, bream, mackerel, herring, trout, salmon, whitebait, gurnard, cod, stickleback, sole, plaice, turbot, brill, dab, flounder, and cat-fish; in short, every one that any respectable person (except a professor of ichthyology) would ever wish to know anything about. All these we may lawfully eat without scruple—they are certainly no ancestors of ours. The fact is, these teleosteans, with their hard sharp bones, are comparatively new comers in marine circles, having nothing to do with the pedigree of old families like the frogs, lizards, birds, mammals, and human beings. An ardent evolutionary housewife has been known to express a hope that in time, with the progress of science, Professor Huxley (now that he has turned his attention to fisheries) might succeed in evolving for us a boneless whiting. Alas! the actual course of evolution has run all the other way. Good old-fashioned palæozoic fish had cartilaginous bones, like those that we still know so well in crimped skate (a cannibal dish, for skate is one of the other class, collaterally related, I must candidly confess, to our own line of ancestry); but as time went on, the old families got outstripped in the race by a younger and less illustrious branch of cadets, with hard bones, who have now taken possession of all the seas and rivers of the world, almost completely ousting the original cartilaginous inhabitants. To say the truth, it is the hard bones that have given them the victory in the struggle for existence, and the cartilaginous kinds are becoming extinct in the water, much as the great saurians have become extinct on the land, through the parallel evolution of far higher and better-adapted forms. If anything, the tendency must be for whiting to get bonier, instead of less bony; and we can only hope, for the sake of our remote descendants, that their bones will at last get so big that there will be no further danger of choking oneself with them.

Put simply, the facts are these. The oldest order of true fishes, above the lampreys, is that of Palæichthyes, a cartilaginous race whose very name of course indicates their venerable position as the real old

piscine stock. They stand to the ordinary hard-boned fish in somewhat the same relation as the marsupials of Australia stand to the higher mammals. It is from them that the amphibians and reptiles are probably descended : and it is among them that the few remaining transitional links are still to be found. From them, too, but in another direction, the bony fish are also derived : and the geological relation of the two classes is just in accordance with this view. It would have been impossible for amphibians or reptiles to be developed from such highly specialised aquatic forms as the perch, the cod, or the turbot ; they could only be developed from a simpler and less specially adapted type like some of the Palæichthyan fishes. It is with these alone, therefore, that we have here to deal, leaving aside all the better-known families whose connection with the main line of descent is merely collateral.

The sharks and rays (including our friend the skate) are the best-known modern instances of the older cartilaginous fishes ; but these too stand a little apart from the central pedigree of the higher animals. It is rather in the very ancient order of Ganoids, once dominant in Devonian and carboniferous seas, but now verging rapidly to extinction, that we must look for surviving relatives of the primitive amphibian forms. Most of the connecting links are here long since dead ; but we have still a few very important types surviving. The Ganoids in question have a cartilaginous skeleton, and a continuous notochord in place of a true backbone, thus diverging but very slightly from the primitive model. Such plasticity of the internal framework, indeed, is an absolutely necessary precedent of the changes whereby limbless creatures were to develop bony, five-toed limbs. Most of these transitional Ganoids have elongated, eel-like bodies, and fins of much the same character as those of the lampreys.

The Australian barramunda may be regarded as the lowest of the connecting links on the road towards the reptilian form. Its history is a very curious one. For several years a great many peculiar fossil teeth of fishes were known from the Triassic and Oolitic formations of Europe and America, and were referred to a supposed extinct genus, *Ceratodus*. But no naturalist expected to meet with a living *Ceratodus* any more than he expected to meet with a living mammoth or a living pterodactyl. In 1870, however, it was reported that there lived in the rivers of Queensland a certain curious native fish commonly known as Dawson salmon—the classificatory powers of the British settler are not of a high order—and possessing the faculty of leaving the water, and walking about casually upon the mudflats. By-and-by, specimens of the supposed salmon arrived in England, and were duly cut up and examined by ichthyological authorities. To the surprise of everybody, they turned out to be modern survivors of the supposed extinct genus *Ceratodus*, with teeth of just the same character as the familiar fossils. Australia, as everybody knows, is a wonderful place for the discovery of such antiquated and elsewhere obsolete creatures. It has not been joined to the main-

land of Asia (as Mr. Wallace has shown), at least since the cretaceous period; and hence it has never been invaded by any of the higher types developed meanwhile in the keener competition of the great continents. This has enabled it to keep to the present day a native fauna belonging practically to the secondary period, though a good deal specialised in certain particular directions. Thus its indigenous mammals are all marsupials; its mud-banks are burrowed by still more archaic ornithorhynchi; its fields are inhabited by the primitive echidna; and its fresh waters are tenanted by such a simple Ganoid type as the barramunda.

What made the discovery of this living fossil all the more interesting, however, was the fact that it exactly supplied a missing link between the ordinary Ganoids and a certain abnormal group whose relation with them had been hitherto unsuspected. The barramunda is a large, awkward-looking fish, about six feet long, with a small pointed head, and a very little-developed brain, as is always the case with ancient types. But the two most important points for us to notice in the present connection are these: first, that it has four limb-like fins, occupying about the same relative position as the legs of a newt; and, secondly, that its swim-bladder has been developed into a sort of rude lung, which assists it to breathe under certain special circumstances. "The barramunda," says Dr. Günther, whose book I have brought out with me by way of light reading—for I hope you don't suppose I am making this all up, as the children say, out of my own head—"the barramunda is said to be in the habit of going on land, or at least on mud-flats; and this assertion appears to be borne out by the fact that it is provided with a lung. However, it is much more probable that it rises now and then to the surface of the water in order to fill its lung with air, and then descends again until the air is so much deoxygenised as to render a renewal of it necessary. It is also said to make a grunting noise, which may be heard at night for some distance. As the barramunda has perfectly developed gills, besides the lung, we can hardly doubt that, when it is in water of normal composition and sufficiently pure to yield the necessary supply of oxygen, these organs are sufficient for the purpose of breathing, and that the respiratory function rests with them alone. But when the fish is compelled to sojourn in thick muddy water charged with gases, which are the products of decomposing organic matter (and this must be the case very frequently during the droughts which annually exhaust the creeks of tropical Australia), it commences to breathe air with its lung in the way indicated above. If the medium in which it happens to be is perfectly unfit for breathing, the gills cease to have any function; if only in a less degree, the gills may still continue to assist in respiration. The barramunda, in fact, can breathe by either gills or lungs alone, or by both simultaneously. It is not probable that it lives freely out of the water, its limbs being much too flexible for supporting the heavy and unwieldy body, and too feeble generally to be of much use in locomotion on land."

Here, then, we have a creature which is in all essential particulars a fish, and a Ganoid fish, but which approaches the amphibians in two important respects—the possession of fins that closely resemble limbs, and the modification of the swim-bladder into true lungs. As compared with the lampreys, too, it shows another mark of advance in the same direction in the fact that it has two pairs of nostrils, instead of a single one; and these nostrils are directly related to the breathing organs, as in higher animals, instead of forming a totally separate organ, as in the lampreys. At the same time we must remember that many intermediate links have now probably perished, though their place can be partially supplied from the analogy of other Ganoids, out of the direct line.

The African lepidosiren, which is also a Ganoid closely allied to the barramunda, though far less like a fish, supplies us with another interesting link in the evolutionary chain. It is a scaly, eel-shaped creature from the Gambia (notice how this early eel shape persists right up to the level of newts and salamanders), with much smaller and slenderer leg-like limbs than the barramunda's, but with the same arrangement of the nostrils, and the same double breathing apparatus of lungs and gills. Moreover, its lung, instead of being single, is divided into two, and has a cellular structure approaching that of a reptile. Lepidosiren lives in the tropical pools of the west coast rivers; and when these dry up in summer, it forms a sort of hollow nest in the mud, lines it inside with mucus, and there lies by coiled up in a torpid state till the rains refill the pools and melt it out again. The clay-balls or cocoons can be dug out and sent to Europe unbroken with the live fish inside; which makes lepidosiren a cheap and favourite object in large aquariums. The limbs are used more like legs than fins, and by their aid the fish crawls along the bottom of its tank, though it also swims at times by the paddle-like action of its flexible tail. Clearly such a creature only needs a few toes to its legs to make it at once a very tolerable amphibian.

So far, the animals we have been considering are all classed as fish; they have no true limbs with feet; they possess gills during their whole lives; they normally live in the water; and if they sometimes venture on dry land, it is for a few minutes only, in search of special food. But there are some small ponds which dry up for a large part of each year, and which are usually full in the spring only; and these, being unfitted for fish of any sort, have become the habitat of that special class of animals that we call amphibians—amongst them, our little frogs and tadpoles on Hole Common here. Every amphibian begins life absolutely as a fish; and in varying degrees, according to their relative development, they end it for the most part as more or less terrestrial animals.

The intermediate stage between fishes and higher amphibians like the frog is best seen in the small class of animals known as perennibranchiates, that is to say, efts which permanently retain their gills throughout life, instead of dropping them as soon as the lungs are developed, like the frogs. Such creatures are of course in the most genuine sense amphi-

bians : they can live entirely on land or entirely in the water, at the same time, just as they please. The line which separates them from the lepidosiren is certainly a very slight one. The siren of the South Carolina rice marshes—so called, I suppose, *a non canendo*—makes an excellent typical example of these early surviving forms. In shape and movements it is still eel-like, but it has distinct and decided legs, the feet being each provided with four toes. This is what makes it, so far as externals are concerned, a true amphibian. On the other hand, the end of the body is flattened fish-fashion, and ringed round by a marked obtuse fin. Our modern siren does not love the rocks, like its Greek namesakes, but rather delights in mud ; and indeed the mud-haunting habits of almost all stranded ancestral vertebrates are very noticeable. It grows to about three feet long. One which was kept in the Zoo used to live in a tank of pond-water, with a deep muddy bottom, and was generally buried an inch or two in the slush whenever a scientific observer wanted to see it. If ever it did condescend to appear, it wriggled about gracefully like an eel, and rarely ventured out of the water. Nevertheless, the siren has true lungs, as well as gills, the latter being external, and forming pretty, lace-like fringes outside the head. In its native State, it goes ashore now and then in search of worms ; but it evidently distrusted English institutions, or else was too well fed in the tank. Several other species are found elsewhere.

We have, however, one still simpler connecting link. The Grotto of the Maddalena in Carniola is probably the largest cave in Europe ; and, like most other large caves, it has a special blind fauna of its own. Such blind subterranean creatures have usually been much modified in special points to suit their very peculiar habitat ; but in their general type they are, as a rule, representatives of extremely ancient forms. They got in there a long time ago, and have been left behind by the rest of the world. In the Carniolan cavern a curious perennibranchiate is still found, by name the proteus ; for somehow a quaintly inappropriate classicalism seems to have pervaded the minds of all the nomenclators who fixed the scientific names of these intermediate creatures. The peculiarity of this particular proteus, indeed, consists in the fact that he doesn't change his form, but always remains much the same as he began ; whereas the higher amphibians all undergo a complete metamorphosis before reaching the adult shape. Strictly speaking, the animal does not belong to the open cave itself so much as to some subterranean reservoir in communication with it ; for it is only now and then that a few are caught by accident in a small pool there. Indeed, all the limestones of Illyria, Dalmatia, and Carniola are honeycombed for hundreds of miles with underground lakes and rivers. Proteus has an eel-like body, a foot long ; it is flesh-coloured, with pretty pink tufts of external gills ; and it has rudimentary eyes in the shape of pigment dots beneath the skin ; for, like the hags, it has nearly got rid of organs for which it has clearly no further use. Here, too, the tail is compressed,

and the little feeble limbs are in a most rudimentary condition. The fore feet have three toes; the hind feet have two only. Thus this castaway of the Adelsburg caverns has preserved for us some very early features of the primitive amphibian ancestor.

“Non cuivis homini contingit adire Corinthum”—everybody has not been to Carinthia to see a proteus. But everybody has been to the Brighton Aquarium, of course, and everybody has noticed there, in a glass case in the vestibule, those pretty little dappled creatures, the Mexican axolotls. Though of less importance in the genealogical scale than the proteus, the axolotl is yet very interesting in its own way as marking another manner in which early types may be more or less preserved for us under exceptional circumstances. It comes from the great lake which surrounds the city of Mexico, and it is much relished as a table delicacy by the connoisseurs of the most volcanic capital even in Spanish America. For my own part, I can manage frogs (at the Café Jollineau), but I draw a line at tadpoles. Now, for a long time, the axolotl was only known in its larval or perennibranchiate form, as an aquatic animal; but suddenly some specimens kept in a tank at the Jardin des Plantes astonished their keepers by developing one summer into a distinct form of American salamander, known as *Amblystoma*. Dr. Weismann, most learned and patient of ponderous German biologists, thereupon began to study the creatures closely, after his microscopic fashion; and he has finally succeeded in proving (at very great length, *more Teutonico*), that the axolotl is descended from a terrestrial *Amblystoma*, but that, in the great saline lake of Mexico, it has reverted in many respects to an ancestral form which is not quite the larval condition, but is an intermediate stage between the two. He attributes this retrogression to the dryness of the high Mexican plateau, which will not permit the axolotls to take to the shore in their full *Amblystoma* stage; for all amphibians, even when terrestrial, require a good deal of moisture in the air to keep their skins damp. Living in such a climate, with a lake which does not dry up in summer, they have naturally reverted to an earlier condition; and though they still preserve some salamandrine peculiarities in their structure, they have practically become a simple type of perennibranchiates once more. On the other hand, when brought to the damp climate of Europe, and forced to live in shallow water for a certain length of time, they can be made to lose their gills and artificially to resume their lost salamander shape. This is one of the most curious practical illustrations of what is called atavism, or “throwing back,” that has yet been recorded, because it is really double-barrelled. We must suppose, first, that a water-animal something like the axolotl gradually took to undergoing a metamorphosis, which made it into an *Amblystoma*; and the *Amblystomas* of the United States still continue to undergo that metamorphosis, exactly as our own frogs do. Then, the *Amblystomas* of Mexico, living under circumstances unfavourable to metamorphosis, must have reverted once more to the axolotl

form, and passed a sort of larval life throughout all their existence. And finally, some such axolotls, brought to Europe, are found again to revert under special conditions to the *Amblystoma* form, and to undergo metamorphosis in the same way as their northern relations.

Our own English newts represent the next stage in ascending order. They live, as everybody knows, in shallow ponds or ditches, and lay their eggs in May or June. From these eggs little tadpoles are produced, with fringed external gills, and very fish-like forms. Towards autumn the gills begin to drop off, and the tadpoles acquire their perfect lizard-like shape. But though they are now lung-breathing creatures, they do not take kindly to terrestrial life. They still pass almost all their time in the water, coming up to the surface every now and then to breathe, but seldom venturing out on to the dangerous shore beside the pond. The lungs are so large that one pull lasts a long time. In their adult form they have four legs, with weak, sprawling toes, which they use almost entirely for groping about in the mud at the bottom: their real organ of locomotion, however, is still the paddle-like tail, by whose aid they propel themselves through the water after the fashion of screw steamers. But indeed the newts at the best of times are sluggish little creatures, like all mud-haunters, and seldom bestir themselves unless they see a boy with a minnow-net looming ominously on the brink somewhere above them. Very occasionally you may catch one crawling about with a weak-kneed, shambling gait beside the water. Amphibians of this higher class are said to be caducibranchiate. It is easy to understand how such a stage could have been reached from that represented for us by the proteus and the sirens.

Just above the newts come the Central European salamanders, those mysterious creatures whose name is best known to us for their mythical fiery propensities. They are in reality very harmless and ordinary little amphibians of a most interesting sort. The spotted salamander begins life as a tadpole, just like the newt: but as it reaches weeks of discretion it loses its gills, acquires serviceable legs, and walks out upon dry land, exactly as the frog does. Unlike the frog, however, it retains its tail throughout life. It thus differs from a lizard (setting aside internal structural peculiarities) mainly in the fact that it starts with gills, whereas the lizard is hatched out of the egg with lungs direct. However, there is one species of salamander in the dry mountains of the south which does not visibly pass through the tadpole stage at all: it is produced alive as a full-formed lung-breathing salamander. Yet even here the embryo has useless gills, thus showing its kinship to the other members of the family.

From such an amphibian as this, the step to the lizards is not a difficult one. The differences (though relatively great to the anatomist) are a mere nothing as regards external form; and even anatomically they are anything but insuperable. The great points of distinction are in the bones. Now, even as far up as the salamanders, ossification is still very

imperfect ; there is plenty of plasticity yet in the skeleton, plenty of room for further improvements and modifications. The ribs are still very rudimentary—mere knobs on the backbone ; the breast-bone is still cartilaginous ; the various parts of the skeleton are still often loosely bound together by ligaments, instead of being mortised into one another by cunning joints. But all these things have comparatively little interest for you and me, who are not anatomical ; when we have got from a lancelet to a salamander, which looks exactly like a lizard in shape, lives like the lizard on dry land, and produces its young as lung-breathing creatures like the lizard itself, we need not quarrel about the single condyle or the quadrate bone, of whose very existence we never knew anything till we were triumphantly requested to account for their evolution. It is enough for us that the lizards have a more perfectly ossified skeleton than the salamanders, that they live on dry land, and that they are hatched from the egg as perfect animals, without undergoing a metamorphosis. Nothing to stagger us anywhere in all that. Only just notice in passing that the lizards, too, the lowest of true reptiles, still keep very much to the original eel-like form. Their limbs, indeed, are of comparatively little use to them, and they wriggle about over the ground with their long tails much as the lampreys, lepidosiren, and proteus wriggle about in the water. Among the closely related snakes, this wriggling habit is even more conspicuous ; but if I were to diverge in that direction, I should never get this long screed finished at all. I must content myself with observing that throughout, in the direct line of ascent from the lancelet to the reptiles, the general shape of the body alters singularly little in any surviving type from its original elongated form.

And now, where in this direct line does the frog stand ? Why, nowhere. He is a divergent higher type among the amphibians, just as the trout and perch group are divergent higher types among the fish ; and he shows by analogy many of the same peculiarities. For, as we saw already, the highest groups in each great class do not form part of the main genealogical stem towards the classes above them : they are specialised in particular directions, and have left the early genealogical forms quite behind them in the race. The frog starts in life as one of these very minute hammer-headed tadpoles, with external gills ; and in that form it is simply a very low type of fish. If it never went any further, we should unhesitatingly class it next to the lancelet. It loves to bury itself in the mud, and otherwise disport itself like a true mud-fish. After a while, however, a pair of hind legs bud out from its side, and then a pair of fore legs ; but the tail and gills still remain ; and in that form it closely resembles the perennibranchiates. If it never went any further, we should unhesitatingly class it next to the proteus. Then the gills drop off, and the tadpole breathes by lungs alone ; in this state, it is essentially a newt. But soon it gets off the line altogether, by losing its tail, which no well-conducted salamander or lizard ever dreams of doing

(except upon compulsion, in which case he soon grows it again); and this marks its place as a higher though still thoroughly amphibian type. The tail does not drop off, but is absorbed by the body. In its perfect form, the frog shows great adaptation to its special mode of life. It has firm solid bones; a well-knit skeleton; and powerful legs for swimming or jumping, which contrast strongly with the feeble sprawling limbs of the newt or even of the lizard. It has specialised itself in the direction of very muscular legs, and has therefore lost its tail, which of course would only impede it in hopping, and be of no particular use even in swimming. At the same time, this very specialisation has precluded it from becoming the ancestor of still more developed types. While the hardened frogs have all remained frogs alone, the plastic salamanders and lizards have slowly widened out into birds and mammals, ending at last with the very highest types of all.

The pipa, or Guiana toad, shows us another way in which the transformation from aquatic to terrestrial animals may take place. Its case is not very different from that of the black salamander, which produces its young alive. The pipa lives in a dry climate, and cannot easily find pools in which to hatch its spawn. Accordingly, as soon as the eggs are laid, the attentive father plasters them all over the mother's back. There they raise small pustules, into each of which an egg is absorbed, and in the cell thus formed the young tadpole is hatched. It passes through its metamorphosis in this queer living honeycomb, and hops out at last a perfect toad. There is hardly any more wonderful instance in nature of cunning adaptation to adverse circumstances. It must have taken a great many generations and a great deal of natural selection to produce such a quaint result as that.

There is another side relationship of the frog, however, which is too full of genealogical interest to be passed by without a word. Do me the justice to admit that, so far, I have spared you the ascidian larva. You knew, however, that before we got to the end of the subject the ascidian larva would certainly be dragged in, tail foremost; and you were quite right. Now, it is perfectly true that you have been quite familiar with that celebrated larva's name and fame any time these last ten years; but do you really know what he is like? I am prepared to stake the best specimen in my case that you don't. An ascidian is one of those queer, sack-like marine animals that one sometimes sees in aquariums, all inflated and distended with salt-water, and looking much like the thumb of a glove turned half inside out. In its adult stage, it is a sessile, semi-transparent creature, sticking firmly to a rock, without head, tail, eyes, or limbs, and so soft that it used always till very lately to be reckoned as an inferior kind of mollusk. But in the larval form, the young ascidian closely resembles the frog's tadpole, and has an exactly similar internal economy. It begins its existence as a translucent glassy little thing, with an eye inside its head (for being as clear as crystal, an eye inside is just as good for it as an eye outside), and it has a

notochord and a tail, and an arrangement of the mouth and gills, much like that of these tadpoles here. The Russian naturalist Kowalewsky has shown that the ascidian is in fact a very degenerate descendant of the same primitive ancestor as the fishes, amphibians, and reptiles: only, while they have gone up in the scale, the ascidian has gone down. In some respects the ascidian larva probably better represents this primitive ancestor than any other among its descendants. It shares with the tadpole and the lancelet the honour of being the most characteristically antique vertebrate now known. As it grows up, however, it runs its head against a rock, and there sticks; its tail drops off, its eye atrophies; and it turns at last into a mere living digestive sac—a blind, motionless, degenerate thing. Such are the bad effects of heedlessly rejecting the theory of progressive development. Had the ascidian only directed its energies into the proper channel, it might have risen at length to be a Chancellor of the Exchequer. “Nor shall divine *Cecilia* pass unsung:” only, regard for scientific accuracy should have made the poet spell it *Cæcilia*. That last unpleasant example among the amphibians deserves a word of recognition before we part. The *cæcilia* of science can only be called divine on a very liberal interpretation of a much-abused word. It is a nasty, ugly, worm-like creature, without legs or feet, and unpleasantly cold and slimy to the touch. Like the frogs and newts, it entirely loses its gills as it approaches maturity; but, unlike them, it never acquires legs or toes. Living in moist mud, where it buries itself deeply, it still keeps up in great perfection the eel-like or snake-like form. For the same reason the eyes are quite rudimentary. Whether *cæcilia* is or is not “the father of all snakes” it would be hard to say. Perhaps we may consider it quite as likely that the snakes are derived from a different line as descendants of some primæval lizard. But whether the real pedigree runs one way or the other, *cæcilia* at least gives us a general idea of the way it might have run; and such analogies are often just as valuable as real links in the biological chain. For example, our own common English blind-worm, or slow-worm, also looks externally very much like a snake; but scientifically it is only a lizard which has lost its legs. It has a scapular arch (whatever that may be), which no respectable snake ought ever to have, and it has also a pair of eyelids, whereas in snakes the skin continues over the eye, merely becoming transparent in that part. Nevertheless, the analogical value of the blind-worm is very great, because it is a lizard which has reached much the same point as the snakes by a different route. It shows us how snakes might have been developed, if they hadn't been developed another way. Similarly, whether *cæcilia* stands in the direct line towards snakes or not, it at least shows us how a snake-like creature might easily be evolved from an amphibian of the salamandrine type, by simple suppression of the weak little legs. Certainly, what eyes it has (minute in some kinds, wanting in others) are in the right place for a forefather of serpents, beneath the skin. If ever such an amphibian took to living on shore

and suppressing its tadpole stage, it would become a snake indeed—that is to say, as soon as it had acquired the proper complement of ribs, for of course it is ribless. But what are ribs to an evolutionist? It is a significant fact, once more, that the chief species of cæcilia come from just the same sort of tropical rivers as the lepidosiren, the barramunda, and almost all our other antiquated types. They are found in Brazil, Cayenne, Malabar, Ceylon, Java, and other moist equatorial countries. The warm muds of the tropics must most closely keep up the average circumstances of life to which our ancestors were subjected during the damp hot period of the great carboniferous flora. Wherever we try to investigate our pedigree, we always get back at last to the dust of the earth, if not precisely in the dry state, at least in its moistened condition as mud. That idea I present gratis as a valuable suggestion to the framers of harmonies and old-fashioned cosmologists.

It is a wonderful pedigree, truly, and difficult to trace in places; but every day now we are getting to know of lost links, and learning to piece it together with greater and greater approach to rough completeness. Nowhere are the links more numerous or more continuous than in the bit of ground we have just gone over together. Chance has preserved the pieces for us very curiously—here in a buried sand-fish; there in an internal parasite; yonder, again, in an Australian mud-haunter, a dweller in African pools, a blind subterranean troglodyte, or an abortive Mexican tadpole. But somehow, by some lucky combination of circumstances, almost every important link *has* been preserved for us somewhere or other; and men of science, with wonderful patience and long co-operation, have dovetailed the fragments of evidence together on our behalf, till at last you and I, sitting here together lazily by the pond on Hole Common, can reconstruct the whole history ideally for ourselves, and see the entire genealogical table unrolled in detail before our mind's eye. And though I spoke just now in jesting disrespect of these same men of science, with their long dry names for small dry bones, we must never forget that only their vast and ceaseless care for petty minutæ could ever have enabled us to get at last at those fundamental truths of organic nature. Months of microscopic toil at the embryological development of the ascidian larva, at the eggs and tadpoles of the frog, at the metamorphosis of the axolotl, at the anatomy and physiology of the lancelet and the lepidosiren, were necessary before we could obtain those few brief and technical summaries of results that lead up in the fulness of time to the great generalisations of the evolutionists. Let us reverently thank the painstaking and watchful men who find out these things for us, and let us not even pretend to laugh at their big words for very little objects. After all, I end where I began: it is the very vastness of their knowledge that sets such a gulf between them and us.

The Muses in Tyrol.

HEINE, who drove through Tyrol to Italy in wet weather and a bad temper, has left a description of his impressions, in which admiration is characteristically tempered with sarcasm. "The Tyrolese," he tells us in the *Reisebilder*, "are handsome, gay, honourable, brave, and—unfathomably *bornés*! They are a very healthy race, perhaps because they are too stupid to know how to be ill." This is a rather malicious account, but it contains a very substantial germ of truth. It would seem at first sight that Tyrol had enjoyed every advantage of natural position. It lies between two of the most intellectually fertile lands of Europe—between the land of the Reformation and that of the Renaissance, the land of Goethe and the land of Dante; and through this cloudy and mountainous region the German has, age after age, first as pilgrim, then as merchant, made his way into the radiance of Italy. In spite of this, however, the Tyrolese are, if we look to culture and refinement rather than to native force and character, among the most backward people of Western Europe. They have no triumphs of art to show; they have never conquered Europe with pen or brush; Innsbruck and Brixen have never been thronged by the flower of foreign youth who once crowded to Florence and Venice, and who now, more sparsely, frequent Berlin and Heidelberg. If they have said anything, even their neighbours have hardly cared to ask what it was; and it may be doubted whether a dozen living Englishmen could mention a single Tyrolese poet. Nevertheless, as "stupid" Bœotia produced Pindar, and "foolish" Abdêra Democritos, so it may be found that unappreciated Tyrol is, after all, less speechless, less infantine than she seems, and has uttered, if not voices like these, yet many tones of piquant originality, and the promise of more. Even amid the fantastic piety of some wayside shrine, or pale, phantom-like cross gleaming against the dark woods, one may often detect verses of a *naïve* quaintness and force which remove them from the vast multitude poured forth to order by the fluent pen of priestly rhymers.

I.

The Muses of Tyrol have not always been obscure. Up to the Reformation the country had taken no insignificant part in the general advance of the German people; the tide of literary vigour had ebbed and flowed here as over the rest of the empire. There were Tyrolese statesmen and poets who were of as much account as any of their con-

temporaries. There was, *e.g.*, the brave and noble-spirited Hugo von Montfort, one of the last of that race of aristocratic poets—the *Minnesängers*—who gave to the German literature of the end of the twelfth century a lustre only equalled by that of the end of the eighteenth. From his castle in Bregenz, that extreme western corner of Vorarlberg which touches the lake of Constance, he came forth to combine the careers of statesman and poet, entrusted with high commissions in Italy by the archdukes, yet finding leisure for many a lyric in which the enthusiasm of the lover is often interwoven with solemn moral allegory, and then again is relieved by a delicate feeling for nature, which he perhaps owes to his Tyrolese birth, and he sings of flowers “blue, green, and white,” and the bird notes—always a favourite subject with a lyric poet—“octave and tenor, long measure and short.” Then there is his younger contemporary—a very different character—the wild and adventurous Oswald von Wolkenstein, who had traversed Europe before he was twenty-five, fought with the Germans against the Lithuanians, with the Hungarians against the Turks, with the Scots against the English, with the Portuguese against the Moors—who could speak ten languages fluently, and indulged the rather childish affectation of using several of them in the same poem—one of those roving, mediæval knights who, like the Ulrich von Hutten, and the Franz von Sickingens of the Reformation period, stood between the princes on the one hand and the peasants and burghers on the other, allying themselves temporarily now with the one, now with the other, but essentially alien from both. And, far greater than either of these, the chief of all the *Minnesängers*, and, next to Goethe perhaps, the greatest lyric poet of Germany, Walter von der Vogelweide, was born in Tyrol (near Klausen, a few hours south of Brixen), and accordingly the Innsbruckers have set up in their public gardens, washed by the broad stream of the Inn, an image of him, in which the bent head and pensive face seem to be listening to the dull, ceaseless roar of the river, as it rushes by all grey and livid from the snows which have swollen its upper course.

The Reformation, too, took a strong hold upon the Tyrol, as upon so many other South German lands which are now Catholic. The whole Alpine region, indeed, came under its influence. Zurich was very early a decidedly Protestant town; it was in the marshes of the Zurich lake that Ulrich von Hutten, hunted out of Germany after the ruin of the knights in 1521, found a last refuge, and wrote with dying hand those stirring stanzas, harsh and obscure in their rugged vehemence, in which he tells his triumphant enemies defiantly that a “spirit cannot be broken that holds the right faith.” From Zurich the new doctrines spread eastwards into the Inn valley, and down the Inn to Innsbruck and Hall. In 1523, Johann Strauss was preaching to thousands of peasants close to the capital. Here too, as elsewhere, political and economic forces aided the religious movement. Just as the Liberals in the Imperial Diet who resisted the autocratic claims of Charles V. were beginning to identify

their cause with that of Protestantism, so in the local parliament of Innsbruck, the deputies who thought the archduke received too much of the public money for his magnificent hunts and tourneys, began to look on Protestantism as a useful ally. And so too the peasants, groaning under the exactions of their feudal lords, began to discover that they might gain by adopting Luther's implicit deference to a Bible which knew nothing about prohibitions to fish and hunt, or tithes of calves and lambs, and which, as it spoke of all men having been redeemed, could not, it was thought, have intended a large proportion of them to be held as serfs. All over South Germany, from Saxony to the borders of Italy, and from the Rhine to the Bohemian forest, the peasant war raged in the early half of 1525. For a time it was absolutely successful. The landowners fled from their castles, or were besieged in them and reduced to make terms. In Tyrol, where the secretary of the bishop of Brixen had put himself at the head of the peasants, the archduke was forced to agree to the free preaching of the Gospel. And though in the north a reaction swiftly ensued, and the peasants, routed in every direction, were reduced to their former condition, in Tyrol and Salzburg this was not altogether so. Here, and here alone, the peasants were able to hold their ground so far that the victors made terms with them rather than prolong the struggle; and a number of exactions, including the restraints upon hunting and fishing, were withdrawn, while the towns received the coveted right of choosing their own clergy.

So promising was the dawn of the Reformation in Tyrol. But there was to be an end of all this. The archduke, though no serious convert like Luther's protector, Frederick of Saxony, coquetted with Reform; and, his subordinates catching his tone, a superficial tolerance of the new opinions coloured the public administration. But he was, after all, only the emperor's deputy; and to pope and emperor it was alike especially important to keep Tyrol in the orthodox faith. For through it, as I have said, lay the highway between Germany and Italy, and Catholics on both sides dreaded the establishment there of a Protestant community who would at once have imperilled the passage of Papal bulls in the one direction, and facilitated that of Lutheran fulminations in the other. And now arose a body of men fully equipped for carrying out their desires, and making it the end and aim of their policy to restore the sway of Catholicism. Thus began the movement known as the Counter-Reformation. The archduke made Jesuit priests his advisers, and at their instigation used every means to root out the new ideas. Lutherans were banished from Tyrol; the yet more offensive Anabaptists were imprisoned and tortured; soldiers broke at midnight into the houses of suspected persons, and searched in the glare of torchlight for the dangerous volumes of Luther and Zwingli; in many valleys, such as the sublime Zillertal, the whole community was driven out at once, and long trains of sorrowful refugees wound down from their upland villages to the lowland, and so along beside the Inn into the Bavarian plain and

across it to the Protestant North ; while from the southern gates of the land the Jesuits poured in to take their place. Everywhere Jesuit schools were established ; the nobility attended only Catholic universities, and the officials outgrew the leanings to Protestantism which had aided its first diffusion, and softened the rigours of the first persecution. Communication with Protestants became more and more dangerous, and more and more rare ; and the mountain walls which the influence of Rome had so easily overstepped proved a barrier to the less perfectly organised influences of her rivals. Tyrol became spiritually a province of Italy, and of an Italy in which the light of the Renaissance was fading into the twilight of ecclesiastical obscurantism, while the finest culture of the day passed into the west and north. Its intellectual isolation was further increased by commercial causes ; for the development of English and Dutch shipping now began to make the sea the highway of commerce ; and the immense and valuable trade between the Mediterranean and Germany, between Venice and Genoa and the Hanseatic ports of the North Sea and the Baltic, was more conveniently carried on by sea than by land, so that the overland route through Tyrol ceased to be thronged by the caravans of merchants which had hitherto broken the routine of Tyrolese life, and infused into the talk even of the men in the village inn, and of the women about their fountains, some stirrings of the air beyond the mountains. The land progressively declined ; and the decline was no less real because it was at first veiled in the luxurious display which the archduke combined with his rigour against heretics. At the Court of Innsbruck he instituted brilliant festivities, plays, tourneys, hunts ; the nobility followed his example, and the burghers sought to forget their misery in riotous self-indulgence. The land was drained with taxation, and the archduke alternately cajoled and threatened the *Stände*, or Estates of the Realm, to extort the large sums he required. Then came the desolation of the Thirty Years' War, which put back for a century the promising development of Germany, and which, though less directly felt in Tyrol, yet prolonged the darkness which ruled there, since it was from Germany alone that it could be dispelled.

II.

Thus isolated from the world of culture, it remained to be seen what the Tyrolese mind and character could produce left entirely to itself. A robust peasant life has, after all, scope enough even under the narrowest Jesuitism ; and so long as it does not aim at enlightenment, it may produce its homely ballads and lyrics to its heart's content undisturbed. Nay, it may be thoroughly pagan in spirit, thoroughly devoted to the joys of the world ; the peasant lover may rail at the cloisters which absorb so many of the comely village maidens, and vow that his mistress is worth more than all the angels of heaven together : but so long as this paganism speaks in quaint dialect and is silent of science and philosophy,

the fine nostril of the priest is satisfied that it is but the harmless paganism of the natural man, not that more deadly kind which saps the base of an absolute Church. And the life of the Tyrolese gave abundant occasion for a homely growth of literature of this kind. The physical aspect of the country abounds in those sharp contrasts which easily provoke poetry from lips not wholly unapt to it. There is the sharp contrast of the seasons which is so vividly felt when, as often happens there, a passing shower leaves a veil of snow upon the mountain tops, and they glimmer white and pale through the summer haze which fills the valleys. Then there is the contrast of the hill and valley regions themselves; and even the town-dweller sees above his tiled roofs and above his cupolas, not sky, but a vision of purple precipice, and rolling masses of pinewood, and stretches of green Alp. But yet the popular poetry of Tyrol is hardly at all a poetry of nature—of external physical nature. It is a poetry of man, and still more of woman: a poetry of society, not of solitude. And Tyrolese society, thanks to the seclusion of the country, has by no means advanced to that pitch of perfection in which song ceases to be in any sense a social institution; in which it is an artificial ornament of the drawing-room, but not an ingredient in the everyday life of the household as natural and necessary as it is to go to confession or to wear a pointed hat and green ribbon. It is not a written literature which we refer to, although a certain portion of it may now, thanks to the industry of some enthusiastic collectors, be purchased at any Innsbruck bookseller's.* It lives in the mouths of the people, and is, in the fullest sense, their offspring and their property. It is not the work of a few inventive heads, preserved by jealous tradition in the general memory. There is probably not a village in Tyrol—not even in the Vinschgau, the Tyrolese Beotia—which does not contain a couple of lively youths and maids capable of improvising the rude couplets (*Schnaderhüpfeln*) of which this literature consists; most of the verses die with the occasion as they are born with it. Like other less homely lyrics, they sprang originally from the excitement of dance and music; and their short and simple strophe—a rhymed couplet with four irregular feet in each line—followed the rhythm of the simplest rustic measures. From the first, probably, the element of dialogue was strong in them. The vivacity of the people, their keen zest for society, their infinite preference, as Goethe puts it, for playing at shuttlecock with another to playing it alone, drew out the dramatic effects of retort and reply, and turned these verses into swift discharges of piquant repartee. They often became pure wit-combats, differing from those which amused the Sicilian shepherds of Theocritus, or the Trouvères of Normandy, little perhaps but in their Teutonic language and Teutonic carelessness of form. Some peasants can carry on such a contest, if not with the rhyming facility of Touchstone, whose

* Cf. *Schnaderhüpfeln*, hrg. von Hörmann. Innsbruck: Wagner.

limit was a week, at any rate for a long evening in the village inn. To be sure, the choice is unrestricted by any slavish deference either to politeness or decorum. Every village incident, comical or noteworthy, which has been elicited by the gossip of the men over their wine, or of the women at the well, is thrashed out once more with new piquancy, to hearers familiar with every detail and relishing every malicious thrust. However, the inn *Gastzimmer* is by no means the only theatre of these performances: lovers begin their midnight interviews with keen encounters of wit; wrestlers get their blood up with discharges of unflattering rhymes. Even where there is no formal dialogue, the thought is almost always concerned with action, revolves continually about the favourite pursuits of hunting, wrestling, and love. "A rifle to shoot with, a *stoss-ring* [or ring of metal worn on the finger, and armed with a sharp point] to strike with, and a *Diendl* to love, a brave 'boy' must have," says one of these couplets. This is the circle of the Tyroler's ideas; he is not meditative, but energetic and passionate; his favourite virtues are those of war and love—*Schneid* or "pluck," and *Frischheit*, the buoyant liveliness of youth. "If I had a wagon," says one, "I never would drive; for the finest thing in love is the labour." "I care not for wealth," says another, "and I care not for gold; a fine, true heart is what's best in the world." And again: "Pluck I have never lacked; oftener gold. Better no gold than no pluck in the world." A fourth declares that rather than ask another to fight his battles, or, as he pithily puts it, rather than beg pluck, he will beg bread. A Carinthian expresses with delightful unreserve his unalterable contempt for his Styrian neighbours: "And I often have said, and I always will say; I've as much pluck alone as the Steier boys together." And so with the second virtue, *Frischheit*. Countless rhymes celebrate the joyous bachelor life, the life of "Wein, Weib und Gesang;" and echo the genial persuasion that the merry folk all go to heaven. "He who knows neither smoke nor snuff, nor dancing, nor drinking, and has no money either, is a shame to the world," says one. Another in more familiar strain: "While we are young, let us be merry: for confessing and crying is time enough." As may be supposed, the Church is treated with scant reverence. "Hei lustig, hei ledig! I geh' i ka Predig'; I geh i ka Amt, und wer' decht (doch) nit verdammt" is the comfortable condition of a third; while a fourth tells with a certain malice how he had gone a pilgrimage, every day early, and found no churches, but of taverns no lack. It is not to be supposed, however, that the Tyroler is a sceptic: on the contrary, the moment the Church appeals to his fighting instead of his praying propensities, he serves her with almost dangerous zeal. Protestants he barely tolerates, Jews he distinctly abhors. A youth, for instance, considers what he should do if he married a Lutheran wife. "Why, turn her into a Catholic!" is his ready solution, in which there is a pleasant combination of devotion to the Church which alone makes blessed, and of thoroughgoing assertion

of a husband's authority. That the husbands do not, however, have it all their own way in Tyrol appears from another saying—one of the pithiest of the collection—in which the hard lot of the married is contrasted with the happy lot of the dead. "Wouldst be railed at? Then marry! Wouldst be praised? Then die!" The chief hearth and home of these verses is, as I have said, the village, upland or valley; where there is always abundant material for the rivalries and jealousies, the battles and passions, of which they are the fruit and at the same time the seed. But when we leave the cluster of timber-roofed huts, and wind up through the pine-woods to the green stretch of Alm or mountain pasture, and higher still follow the huntsman in his lonely pursuit of the chamois, these verses, with the flavour of vivid dramatic interchange of feelings which is so congenial to them, follow us still; the peasant, even when most solitary, has no poetry of solitude, he shows the mountaineer's indifference to the mountains; and his keenest feelings as he springs from rock to rock are the physical zest of the chase, and, closely attending on and blending with this, the zest of another chase, in which the *Gemsbock* is transformed into a *Diendl*, and the craggy precipice into an Alpine hut, and the hot pursuit into eager wooing.

The basis of the national character is, in fact, not religion, though Tyrol is a fervently Catholic country, nor humour, though it is a gay and lively one, but passion; and passion which, once excited, is expressed with little of the reserve usual in a more self-conscious society. At ordinary times, however, a genial good-nature veils this stormy vehemence, and a casual observer easily supposes that the gay laughter and pleasant friendly talks which he everywhere hears about him are the basis, the lowest substratum, of the character of the people. They are only, as it were, the grass and flowers upon the surface; and ever and anon an abyss opens, and you have a momentary glimpse of the volcanic fires which rage beneath this pleasant show. The present writer never witnessed a quarrel in Tyrol but once; but that was a quarrel not to be forgotten. The two carters who mutually disputed a narrow way yelled and screamed at one another; and for a while the throng of passers-by suspended their pleasant laughter to listen. But a gendarme arrives, the difficulty is overcome, the carts drive off; and then at once the merry groups re-form, and laughter rises anew, and the bright surface of Tyrolese life closes again over the chasm.

III.

Such, in fragmentary outline, was the life and character which, if a mental revival was ever to be the lot of Tyrol, must supply, if not the seed, the nourishing soil. But external influences penetrated slowly, and were still more slowly assimilated. The clerical authorities kept intellectual life in the closest restraint; and they had done their work

so effectively that the people at large were quite unconscious of any oppression. The want had been denied satisfaction till it disappeared; the organ starved till it ceased to act. In such cases of course the disease does not bring its own cure; and it is hard to say how long it would have prevailed, had it not been for the intervention of one of those national convulsions in which the life of a people is stirred to its depths, of which the immediate result is only ruin and misery, but which often effect mental revolutions such as centuries of prosperity and dull annals could not have compassed. The great rising of 1809 had other and more lasting consequences than the expulsion of the French and Bavarians from Tyrol, which for one brief brilliant moment it achieved. No doubt the movement, though primarily patriotic, was in a sense religious; and gathered intensity from the animus of a Catholic people against the deism or atheism of the French oppressor; priests were often active, the brave pastor Haspinger was among the foremost leaders; and several exciting moments of the struggle did not fail to be attended by the miracles habitual in Catholic lands. But with all these signs of Catholic enthusiasm, the struggle was really, for the blighting Jesuit rule, the beginning of the end. Tyrol became for the first time vividly conscious of itself; and while the unthinking exulted in the memory of their prowess, and the European fame which it had won them, the quicker spirits began to discover with a pang that their eminence in valour concealed a strange deficiency in most of the qualities which had made other nations strong and prosperous. Tyrol was poor and it was ignorant; agriculture was neglected, the forests recklessly wasted, and intelligence reduced to its lowest terms.

Great refinement is supposed to enable men in misfortune to apply, if not the Stoic remedy of endurance, at least the Epicurean remedy of luxuriating in the pathos of their situation. The Tyrolese have hardly as yet acquired this art. Like Jason's weeping Greeks, they are not at all ashamed to express their grief loudly and bitterly; and they are as strange to the charm of finely-uttered sorrow as to the stern joy of resolute silence. It is assuredly no mild querulousness or vague laments at their unhappy lot which contents them; on the contrary, their active temperament instinctively seeks some personal and responsible cause for their pain, some palpable defendant who can be talked at, if not punished. It is not surprising, then, that the most striking note of the reviving literature of Tyrol was a militant and aggressive antipathy to Jesuitism. Patriotic exultation there is in abundance, stern delight in the memory of hard-fought battles, sympathetic enthusiasm for the rushing river and the lonely peak. But this mood rarely lasts long; the note of exultation gives way to an ever-recurring fierce refrain; the solemn music is interrupted by harsh and dissonant chords of passionate hatred. There is a continual alternation of joy that Tyrol was what it was, and indignation that it had been prevented from becoming what it might have been. So it is, for example, with the lonely and unhappy Johann Senn, the first

name of distinction in the Tyrolese revival.* One poem at least of his attained the glory of being sung in every village of Tyrol. It is still the most universal of Tyrolese patriotic songs. Those long, curved tobacco pipes which are rarely absent from the Tyrolese peasant's lips, often excite the traveller's curiosity by the minute writing which covers the bowl. If he look close, he will possibly find that the five or six stanzas of Senn's "Adler, Tiroler Adler" are all there. It is a spirited lyric, built up entirely of images that recall the dearest associations of the country, though they are expressed no longer in the hearty and definite prose of the *Schnaderhüpfel*, but with the vague imaginative suggestiveness of lyrical poetry. The first stanza may suffice to show the simplicity and originality of conception, and the stirring rhythm, which fit it so well to be a *Volkslied*. Senn addresses the Eagle of Tyrol:—

"Adler, Tiroler Adler!
Warum bist du so roth?"
"Ei nun, das macht, ich sitze
Am First der Ortler-spitze:
Da ist's so sonnen-roth
Darum bin ich so roth!"

Senn died miserably poor, and suffered the frequent fate of lyric poets, to be forgotten by those who sing their songs. A lonely and sad recluse during his life, few remembered him as the author of the, to most persons anonymous, "Adler" song. There was one exception, however, to this general oblivion. The lonely singer was compensated for the indifference of the Tyrolese whom he had served by the solicitous attentions of the clerical authorities whom he had satirised. The long and faithful memory of the priesthood treasured up his name and his performances. Fourteen years after his death, vengeful hands mutilated the marble "Eagle of Tyrol" upon his tomb. Almost a generation had then passed since the war between Liberals and Clericals had broken out in Tyrol; and it was Senn who had opened the campaign, with a series of scathing sonnets directed against the fanatical Josef Giovanelli, and two ignorant and narrow-minded priests, Moritz and Probst, who administered the censorship.

Meanwhile the University of Innsbruck, released at length from clerical control, was becoming the head-quarters of Liberalism as well as of culture. About 1830 were to be found there a group of young men, none of whom perhaps could claim the title of genius, but who had the great merit of founding a tradition of poetic culture in Tyrol. The collection of poems—*Alpenblumen*—which they published in 1827, had little originality. It was full of reminiscences of Matthison, Salis, and other minor German Romantic poets. It may, indeed, be regarded

* Many of the facts used in the present section are drawn from two articles by Pichler in the *Wiener Literaturblatt*—the most authoritative and at present almost unique coherent survey of them.

as one of the last products of the tide of Romantic teaching which had been at its height in Germany in the first two decades of the century, and which wandered into the secluded mountains of Tyrol only when it had already forced the yet more formidable barriers of speech and race, and kindled enthusiasm in the Paris of Hugo and Musset, and the Italy of Manzoni. In Germany it was already dissolving; the versatile Count von Platen, who had formerly damaged it by extravagant discipleship, was now damaging it, in his famous *Romantic Edipus*, by brilliant parody; and the "Young Germans," with Heine and Börne at their head, were doing their utmost to destroy whatever authority still attached to its ideals—to its mediæval sentiment, its religiosity, its Sartor-like worship of mystery. To "Young Germany," young Tyrol was decisively opposed. Its ridicule of German patriotism was an insult to the sons of the heroes of 1809; and its light handling of morality revolted men who, with all their rebellion against obscurantism, still clung to the naïve earnestness of their fathers. In spite of this, however, young Tyrol was not in the fullest sense Romantic. It was impossible for it to feel towards the Church, for example, as the Romantic converts F. Schlegel and Werner felt, who from a land in which Protestantism and Illumination had produced their worst (as well as their best) fruits, looked across the chaotic waters of individualism to the dome of St. Peter's as the type of unity. The men of "Young Tyrol," on the contrary, were only too familiar with a unity which had been bought by forcibly expelling every fruitful germ of opposition from the land, and, far from admiring it, they looked enviously at the culture of anarchic Germany, and at the political maturity of free-thinking France. In a word, they united with the temper of mysticism the attitude of revolution—a perilous combination which continually threatened to dissolve; and it was not long before the little Innsbruck group was split into hostile factions. The most aggressive of them was Joseph Streiter, a keen, bold, determined man, who out-manceuvred the clerical party by carrying the war which the censorship made impossible in Tyrol into the arena of foreign journalism. Great was the indignation when it was discovered one morning that one of these innocent and pious Tyrolese, who were supposed to enjoy a far more lively intercourse with angels and saints than with foreigners, had published a flaming article in a Heidelberg paper. Streiter alone of the whole group embraced the Revolution of 1848 with enthusiasm. And yet when he wrote poetry, no one betrayed more clearly than he the mysticism of the Romantic reaction. In his *Mystery*, for example, he seeks to restore the faith in a divine providence, which Byron in *Cain* had attacked with strictly intellectual weapons, by appealing to "emotion, the true and greatest faculty of man." Precisely in the same spirit the Romantics had sought to discredit intelligence as the instrument of *Aufklärung* and unbelief, until Hegel, advancing its claims with irresistible energy, annihilated for the time all rivals of the philosophy of Thought. In Johann Schuler, the second of the group, the contrast was

less sharp. He adhered long to the religion of his youth, and readily returned to it under feminine influences, to abandon it finally once more. His mild, conciliatory temper deprecated violent ruptures and inclined to compromise; and the energetic Streiter would impatiently cut short his balanced pros and cons with his favourite formula, "Either—Or!" He was not a poet, but he had the wide and receptive taste of a good critic. As Archive-keeper of the Tyrolese parliament, he was the centre of intellectual life at Innsbruck; and his rich library supplied inquiring youths with all the books which the censorship particularly desired they should not read. There was more of stormy pathos in the life of his friend Beda Weber. A mystic by nature, he early committed himself to an ecclesiastical career, from which he found no escape. His alert intelligence rebelled at the monotonous exercises of the cloister where he was confined; and he employed the hours appointed for solitary meditation in studying history and editing the old Tyrolese *Minnesänger* Oswald von Wolkenstein. The worldliness of Catholicism and the rigidity of Lutheranism were equally repugnant to him. He felt himself growing benumbed by his surroundings. "How can a spirit like mine prosper," he writes to Schuler, "in a career where it can never utter itself, where the hypocrisy of seeming-holy priests spins a web about it, penetrating it also with the same hypocrisy? The air is pestilent. Whoever remains in it ends by believing in the miserable rôle which he has to perform, against his nature, with his whole equipment of power and cunning." Few, however, knew of these heresies; and Streiter, who had now little intercourse with either of the others, regarded him as an Ultramontane, and persisted in crediting him with a series of articles in the *Augsburg Postzeitung* in which all the venom of the incensed clericals was discharged against the revivers of culture in Tyrol. Weber keenly felt the accusation, the mere raising of which seemed to isolate him from the forward movement of his country. "I am alone, I am dead," he bitterly writes; . . . "and the more the world repels me, the more familiar I become with nature, and the more does divine power shine to me out of every bud. I am growing pantheistic and cannot help myself." In Weber's poems there is the same combination which is suggested here, of keen satiric revolt against ecclesiastical formalism, with the wondering and worshipping mysticism which the sons of a mountain country seem to breathe in with the mountain air, and to which they often adhere, amid the wreck of all else, with the implicit deference due to an instinct or a spell. All three, different as they are, —Streiter the revolutionary poet, Schuler the mild apostle of humanity, Weber the rebellious friar—exhibit this note of the mountain-land; they breathe of the soil.

Interesting, however, as this little group of Innsbruck poets is, their importance lay less in their writings than in their influence. Such reputation as they obtained beyond the walls of their narrow home, they owed more to their deficiencies as sons of the Church than to their

achievements as sons of song. But they created an intellectual matrix in Tyrol in which men of more decisive talents were to be shaped and moulded.

IV.

The two poets of whom we have to speak in conclusion have contributed genuine treasures to the great stores of German literature. Out of Germany both Gilm and Pichler are almost unknown; and even within it, the unassuming form in which their productions have crept into the world has confined them to a circle little larger than that select dinner-party with whose suffrages Landor said he could defy the indifference of the rest of mankind. Yet in this circle, Gilm passes for one of the most exquisite of recent lyric poets, and Pichler for the author of a series of narratives in verse at once classical in form and intensely Tyrolese in substance. Hermann v. Gilm was one of those fragile personalities, of sickly frame and undecided character, which occur oftener in the decline of a civilisation than in its robust youth. He was a poet of the timid and retiring kind who are as often perhaps found among men of slight physique as among those who, like Falstaff, Horace, and, if we are to take his mother's word, Hamlet, have "much flesh, and therefore much frailty." Fear of political consequences and diffidence of his poetical powers probably combined to prevent him from ever publishing a collected edition of his poems. After his death, in 1864, an imperfect edition was issued by his friends, in which most of those which he had feared to publish were omitted, while some about which he was very reasonably diffident were included. For all this, however, Gilm was undeniably a power even in the political struggle from the rougher and ruder affrays of which he nervously shrank. He had those accessions of intense energy which belong to men of nervous temperament, and which are often more formidable to their enemies than the sustained efforts of far stronger men. In the years before '48, when the ideas which intelligent men cared to print were becoming nearly coincident with those which the censorship insisted upon striking out, cultivated circles in Tyrol were excited by certain poems, handed about in manuscript, which dealt unsparing blows at the prevailing incubus. The most striking of these were the famous stanzas upon "The Jesuit." There is little subtlety in it, no keen dialectic, no argumentative exposure in detail. It is not a *Lettre Provinciale*; it does not seek to persuade, but to express what all felt. A plain picture in a few simple but trenchant verses suffices:—

A dusky being prowls around
 On silent, stealthy feet:
 It has no smile, it makes no sound;
 Its name is Jesuit.

No rest has soothed and no repose
 Its pallid face by night;

At dawn its eyelids tightly close
Against the mordant light.

With shaven head it goes its way,
In funeral garment dight;
And wherever it sees the breaking day
Brings in again the night.

Sometimes his indignation is more specifically that of a son of the Muses. In his *Lieder eines Verschollenen* he bitterly contrasts the insignificance of the poetry of Tyrol with the glories of its scenery and the abundance of its paintings. "Thou hast seen Art of an unearthly splendour gleam in the churches under its radiant crowns; the true and loyal heart of the whole people uttered in the painted smile of the Madonna. But no poet hast thou met that matched yon Wildbach with his rush and roar, breaking chains asunder, and raining diamonds as bridal jewels for his young roses :"—

Sieh dich nur um! Erkennst du die Standarten?
Die schwarzen Mäntel und die breiten Hüte?
Die dulden auf der Erde keinen Garten,
Und auf dem Baum des Lebens keine Blüthe.

Or, again, he calls into his service the poet's mythology of nature; the mountains growl at the presence of his enemies, the woods wish them away; but neither the resentment of nature nor the hatred of man disturbs their cheerful unconcern :—

Sie ändern keinen Ton in ihrer Kehle,
Und schneiden keinen Zoll von ihrem Hut!

A bolder man than Gilm might have left words like these unsigned; and the keen eye of his victims—"das Argus-auge, dem kein *Arg* sich birgt," as Senn had said—sought indignantly for the author. The Tyrolese can keep a secret well, but the rarity of poetical talent made the possible culprits few. The "Songs of One Unknown" did not long remain anonymous. Gilm had written confidently before the discovery, that if his name should ever be detected, "an angel's wing will shelter me and hide me!" This, however, was but the flourish of an inspired moment; and when the discovery was immediately followed up by a furious attack upon him in the *Augsburg Postzeitung*, he seems to have drawn little consolation from the prospect either of the "angel's wing" or that of the Tyrolese eagle, which he afterwards rather naively substituted for it. He writes in sore trouble (April 1845) to the veteran Senn: "We were long comrades, and have had many hours of intimacy. Years are gone, and now we stand arm in arm on the pillory, and over us waves the stigmatised flag of 'Young Tyrol.' This malicious denunciation in the name of Rome has made my position untenable. I must do something, and know not what. Old lion, rouse yourself!" Elsewhere Gilm tells an amusing story, doubtless only symbolical, of his experiences as a suspect. Sailing on a placid lake with a band of "Young Tyrolese," his

companions, while he slept, hoisted the proscribed flag of "Young Tyrol," and left him. The vessel was seen by the authorities, and boarded; but after searching high and low for treasonable papers, they found that all he had on board was—half a dozen love-letters. The actual issue of his campaign seems, indeed, to have been little more formidable than this. He was protected by his rank, and by his official position in the Tyrolese administration. In 1847 he was called to Vienna to a still higher office. The revolution which followed he approved, though holding aloof from it. The rest of his life was passed in the work of a highly respectable bureaucrat, first at Vienna and afterwards at Linz; and after one more brief visit to Tyrol, he died in 1864.

Almost all that is lasting in Gilm's writings belongs to his Tyrol period. In Vienna the air was not favourable for more anti-clerical invective; but the tamed lion was often applied to by his friends for those "verses on special occasions" which embitter the lives of poets of repute; and he employed many leisure hours, harmlessly enough, in celebrating betrothals and marriages, the emperor's escape from assassination, distributions of prizes to children, and the like. But all his best verse breathes of Tyrol, and was written there. He was the first to give as full and rich expression to the poetry of Tyrol life, as the *Schnaderhüpfeln* had given to its prose. No one, for example, has so vividly rendered the life at the butts and in the chase, as the sensitive poet who for his own part shrank from warfare, and declined, with a poet's sympathy, to take the life of bird and beast. Many a Tyrolese peasant who is indifferent to verse, unless it be—in the schoolboy's distinction—"either comic or holy," a funny song, or a pious stave scrawled under a Madonna, finds the exhilaration of serious poetry in the whizzing and crashing bullet, especially if, as the Tyrolese fashion is, it is the handiwork of his wife or mistress. Making bullets is among the chief functions of the women of a Tyrolese village. "Here in Tyrol poems are not sung but *cast*," says an old marksman in Gilm, pregnantly. Every phase of this passionately loved pursuit is glowingly described. The flags that stand as prizes are waving briskly; the bullets whistle, the man at the butts waves his hat, the peasants in their embroidered hose shout till the empty glasses ring and the precipices echo. The boys look on emulously; each one knows the sound of his father's rifle in a thousand, and, when the gun is fired as a sign that it has hit the black, thinks there is nothing in this world so fine as shooting. Or we see the old marksman of the Pragser See, whose eyes no longer serve for the butts or his legs for the mountains, but who, rather than lay his beloved rifle by, limps along the lake side humbly slaughtering crows. Most vividly of all is told the sadness of the time when the peasant was forbidden to wear the rifle, and the frantic delight with which he welcomed its restoration. "Our land was sick, brothers, and longing vexed its soul; and barren was the house and court and chamber wall, lacking the best and the most fair. Zither and song were mute, the wine threw no pearls into the glass, and when we lay down in

the moist mead, the soldier long dead and buried lay not stiller than we. Sad days! until at last a great lord took pity on us, and with our old weapon gave us once more the old gay life, the sport, the dance, the pipe, the old freedom and the old songs."

But, after all, a purely animal excitement like that of shooting could scarcely draw out all the poetry of a poet. And Gilm especially, in his quality of a feminine poet, is more transparently read in a series of sonnets ("Aus Wälsch-Tyrol") upon an unhappy love-affair. The bright, objective pictures of peasant life here give place to pieces of subtle and imaginative symbolism; what is perceived by eye and ear is only valued for its relation to what is discerned by the spirit or felt by the heart. A thick screen of emotions and fancies subdues the clearness and radiance of nature; transmutes, as it were, the broad day into the many-hued twilight of a wood. Gilm is not the first man to whom nature has become transfigured through the influences of love, or who has drunk in a religious mysticism while luxuriating in a purely human passion. But most men, when their hope is wrecked, turn bitterly away from the imaginative superstitions it had inspired, and find comfort in the belief that nature is a desert, and man an automaton. With Gilm, however, the mystic transfiguration of nature is too deep-seated to be thus got rid of; once raised it cannot be exorcised. Its visions linger obdurately before his averted eyes. "Now that our love," he cries, "is enearthed, I would fain stamp also into the earth the Paradise; but the candles of it are nailed too deep, and every grass-blade holds its torch too firmly, and all the flowers pray and breathe incense before the empty tabernacle." One feels the child of a Catholic people in this transmutation of the processes of nature into those of a solemn Mass: a northern mind in similar circumstances would fall more congenially into the Wordsworthian conception of Nature as pervaded by an elevating but impersonal life. To all appearance Gilm was as sincere in his handling of Nature as Wordsworth was in his; at any rate he had not less reverence for the plant life, which he imagined "singing" and "praying," than Wordsworth had for that which gave him "thoughts too deep for tears." And so Gilm could pass on with complete ease to handle the mythic legends in which popular fancy had personified inanimate nature so frankly and so naïvely, and which Wordsworth so uniformly avoided, as false and "Augustan." Such a legend is that of the Tyrolese Stradivari, Jacob Stainer, of Absam, near Innsbruck—one of whose violins, as our readers will remember, was used by the Jesuit emissary, John Inglesant. He goes out into the forest to find fit wood for his delicate work. He taps the pine trunks and listens, "full of fear and hope, as though he were knocking at his mistress's door." The sound is at first like a lament, or soft weeping; and an agonised questioning flies trembling through every branch. Then it is a wild cry, "like the death-song of a swan struck to the heart." But the master pitilessly lays it low in the soft moss, and strips its fair white body bare. All through the night he works; before dawn the

violin is made, and he exultingly takes it up, to try "whether there lurk in our pines no songs that can find out the heart of Tyrol." But as he draws the bow across the strings he starts; for instead of a violin note a human voice is heard. The spirit of the tree, to which Stainer has now given a tongue, speaks, and bitterly reproaches him for destroying the beautiful wood-life, in his vain attempt to get the pure soul of music :—

Die Seele willst du, Meister,
Die Seele splitternackt;
Thor du! die freien Geister
Gehn nicht nach deinem Takt!

He is struck to the heart by those words, and as day dawns upon his night of toil, a darkness from which there is to be no dawn settles down upon his mind.

We have called Gilm a feminine poet: and the refined sentimentality of a lyric like this seems to justify an epithet primarily suggested by his maidenly withdrawal from the stress of stormy events. He struck boldly enough at the Jesuits, but his sudden alarm at the prospect of retaliation pleasantly recalls the tremors of Viola, forced to fight with the terrible Sir Andrew, and wanting little to make her confess her sex. Altogether different is the character of Gilm's younger brother-poet, Adolf Pichler. We say "younger," but he is now a hale and vigorous old man, who has done his best work since Gilm's death; a rich and many-sided nature, geologist as well as poet, as familiar with Italy as with Germany, with Dante as with Goethe, and no stranger to Greece and Rome. He is masculine even to a fault. The reader is struck at once by a certain harshness of form and manner—the *Derbheit*, which even the refined Tyrolese with difficulty throws off. He assails his opponents with unsparing candour. Sometimes we seem to hear the bitter humour of Teufelsdröckh, as when he cries to a poet who under-estimated his debt to the past: "Why, O long-eared one, dost thou prick thy ears so high? The sack of corn thou carriest is not thine!" Oftener, however, the shrill intensity of Northern invective is exchanged for a sort of genial pugnacity more characteristic of Tyrol. In the following, for example, the poet's contempt for the "vermin" he assails is quaintly lighted up by the collector's appreciation of their value as specimens :—

Ungeziefer, heran! Ich habe die Nadeln in Fülle,
Euch zu spiessen, vermehrt immer die Sammlungen mir.

Throughout Pichler, indeed, the poet and the student of science are suggestively alternated. The occasion of the little histories he relates is generally a wild geological ramble among the mountains; and the symphony of human joy and sorrow is opened by the sharp notes of a ringing hammer. Not that Pichler can be said to blend the two spheres of science and art, as Goethe blent them. Goethe's theories of affinity, or of the metamorphosis of plants and animals, belong as much to his

poetic as to his scientific growth; in passing say from Tasso to his poems upon these subjects, or in his novel, *Die Wahlverwandtschaften*, we seem to be observing perfectly harmonious phases of the same activity; whereas in Pichler the two spheres offer rather a picturesque contrast. Nevertheless, the long solitary excursions had perhaps as much influence on Pichler's poetry as upon Wordsworth's, though the latter was distracted by no immediate practical aims, and has, indeed, an amusing description, at once patronising and contemptuous, of those who, like Pichler, go about "smiting the edge of luckless rock," and "classing it by some barbarous name." A few miles from Innsbruck, in a wild and desolate spot of the Mittelgebirge, are still visible the low walls of a ruined hut, almost overgrown by the tangled brake, and peering out of luxuriant festoons of fern and clusters of harebells. This was once the retreat of a "Solitary" driven from society by his neighbours' malice and the injustice of the law; and here Pichler once found shelter with him from the stress of a storm, and heard his story, which he tells again, without either the occasional sublimity of the *Excursion* or its frequent prolixity, and with a dramatic warmth and vigour quite strange to it. At another time we find the poet taking his ease in the garden of the village inn. The company and their talk are described with a few graphic touches which recall the inn-scenes of *Silas Marner*: the gay youths and maidens under the spreading pear-tree; the lame sexton and sometime village-fiddler, with his white locks escaping from his leather cap; the irreverent young peasant who draws upon himself the old man's wrath. It is the anniversary of an incident the memory of which the village will not willingly let die; and the old sexton is easily persuaded to tell it once more. It was in a lull of the great revolt; a company of the French army were encamped close by, to the great annoyance of the village. The women devised a plot to get rid of them. Into the meadow as evening comes on they troop gaily to the dance, with the smile of Judith on their lips. The Frenchmen after a little hesitation join them. All the peasants seem to have vanished, except, indeed, the young lad who as an old man tells the story, and who, as he vigorously plies his violin, steals anxious glances through the twilight into the neighbouring cornfields. The soldiers grow familiar, the maidens timid. At length he perceives a quivering in the tall ears—as slight as a fox causes in his stealthy pursuit of a quail. Wilder and wilder goes the dance; then there is a faint click, "like the click of the scythe on the rye-stalk," hardly audible to the unwonted ear. It is the cocking of rifles. He plays furiously, till the strings almost snap; a soldier is already plucking the flower at his partner's breast. Then there is a blaze of light, and a crash—and the Frenchmen writhe on the ground.

These two poems, the *Hexenmeister* and the *Todtentanz*, belong to a little group of about half a dozen, written within about as many years, and possessing the same sterling qualities. The most striking of these is perhaps the manly directness of expression, the emphatic but unaffected

simplicity. A certain native sincerity, a rugged impatience of the superfluous, which belongs to the Tyrolese character, have their part in this; but more is probably due to Pichler's constant study of the terse and pregnant line of Dante. No man more contemptuous of an excellence which lies wholly in pretty details. "In arithmetic no doubt the sum of the parts makes the whole; but not in Life." "In old days bread was made of meal with a flavouring of spice; now the spice is all, and the meal forgotten." No one, moreover, is less tainted with two besetting sins of German popular literature. He is as free as Wordsworth from sentimentality, and a great deal freer from *Tendenz*. His pathos is of the stern kind which, as in "Margaret," is more moving than tender and languishing sympathy. He is above all masculine—abrupt and pregnant where Gilm is graceful, and, moreover, a realist where Gilm is a mystic. We do not reckon him among the great creators; what he has done is rather this: to apply a cosmopolitan culture to Tyrolese themes. And we cannot better close this sketch of the poets of Tyrol than with the fine epigram in which he has expressed an ideal which he has himself upon the whole more fully accomplished than any of his fellows:—

Was du gewannst als Cosmopolit, durchstrebend das Weltall,
Weihe dem Vaterland, dieses verleiht ihm den Werth!

The Merry Men.

CHAPTER IV.

THE GALE.

I FOUND my uncle at the gable end, watching the signs of the weather, with a pipe in his fingers.

"Uncle," said I, "there were men ashore at Sandag Bay ——"

I had no time to go further; indeed, I not only forgot my words, but even my weariness, so strange was the effect on Uncle Gordon. He dropped his pipe and fell back against the end of the house with his jaw fallen, his eyes staring, and his long face as white as paper. We must have looked at one another silently for a quarter of a minute, before he made answer in this extraordinary fashion: "Had he a hair kep on?"

I knew as well as if I had been there, that the man who now lay buried at Sandag had worn a hairy cap, and that he had come ashore alive. For the first and only time I lost toleration for the man who was my benefactor, and the father of the woman I hoped to call my wife.

"These were living men," said I, "perhaps Jacobites, perhaps the French, perhaps pirates, perhaps adventurers come here to seek the Spanish treasure ship; but, whatever they may be, dangerous at least to your daughter and my cousin. As for your own guilty terrors, man, the dead sleeps well where you have laid him. I stood this morning by his grave. He will not wake before the trump of doom."

My kinsman looked upon me, blinking, while I spoke; then he fixed his eyes for a little on the ground, and pulled his fingers foolishly; but it was plain that he was past the power of speech.

"Come," said I. "You must think for others. You must come up the hill with me, and see this ship."

He obeyed without a word or a look, following slowly after my impatient strides. The spring seemed to have gone out of his body, and he scrambled heavily up and down the rocks, instead of leaping, as he was wont, from one to another. Nor could I, for all my cries, induce him to make better haste. Only once he replied to me complainingly, and like one in bodily pain: "Aye, aye, man, I'm coming." Long before we had reached the top, I had no other thought for him but pity. If the crime had been monstrous, the punishment was in proportion.

At last we emerged above the sky-line of the hill, and could see around us. All was black and stormy to the eye; the last gleam of sun had vanished; a wind had sprung up, not yet high, but gusty and un-

steadily to the point; the rain, on the other hand, had ceased. Short as was the interval, the sea already ran vastly higher than when I had stood there last; already it had begun to break over some of the outward reefs, and already it moaned aloud in the sea-caves of Aros. I looked, at first, in vain for the schooner.

"There she is," I said at last. But her new position, and the course she was now laying, puzzled me. "They cannot mean to beat to sea," I cried.

"That's what they mean," said my uncle, with something like joy; and just then the schooner went about and stood upon another tack, which put the question beyond the reach of doubt. These strangers, seeing a gale on hand, had thought first of sea-room. With the wind that threatened, in these reef-sown waters and contending against so violent a stream of tide, their course was certain death.

"Good God!" said I, "they are all lost."

"Ay," returned my uncle, "a'—a' lost. They hadnae a chance but to rin for Kyle Dona. The gate they're gaun the noo, they couldnae win through an the muckle deil were there to pilot them. Eh, man," he continued, touching me on the sleeve, "it's a braw nicht for a shipwreck! Twa in ae twalmonth! Eh, but the Merry Men 'll dance bony!"

I looked at him, and it was then that I began to fancy him no longer in his right mind. He was peering up to me, as if for sympathy, a timid joy in his eyes. All that had passed between us was already forgotten in the prospect of this fresh disaster.

"If it were not too late," I cried with indignation, "I would take the coble and go out to warn them."

"Na, na," he protested. "Ye maunnae interfere; ye maunnae meddle wi' the like o' that. It's His"—doffing his bonnet—"His wull. And, eh, man! but it's a braw nicht for't!"

A sense of loathing began to fill my soul; and, reminding him that I had not yet dined, I proposed we should return to the house. But no; nothing would tear him from his place of outlook.

"I maun see the hail thing, man Cherie," he explained; and then as the schooner went about a second time, "Eh, but they han'le her bony!" he cried. "The *Christ-Anna* was naething to this."

Already the men on board the schooner must have begun to realise some part, but not yet the twentieth, of the dangers that environed their doomed ship. At every lull of the capricious wind they must have seen how fast the current swept them back. Each tack was made shorter, as they saw how little it prevailed. Every moment the rising swell began to boom and foam upon another sunken reef; and ever and again a breaker would fall in sounding ruin under the very bows of her, and the brown reef and streaming tangle appear in the hollow of the wave. I tell you, they had to stand to their tackle: there was no idle man aboard that ship, God knows. It was upon the progress of a scene so horrible to any human-hearted man, that my misguided uncle now pared

and gloated like a connoisseur. As I turned to go down the hill, he was lying on his belly on the summit, with his hands stretched forth and clutching in the heather. He seemed rejuvenated, mind and body.

When I got back to the house already dismally affected, I was still more sadly downcast at the sight of Mary. She had her sleeves rolled up over her strong arms, and was quietly making bread. I got a bannock from the dresser and sat down to eat it in silence.

"Are ye wearied, lad?" she asked after a while.

"I am not so much wearied, Mary," I replied, getting on my feet, "as I am weary of delay, and perhaps of Aros too. You know me well enough to judge me fairly, say what I like. Well, Mary, you may be sure of this: you had better be anywhere but here."

"I'll be sure of one thing," she returned; "I'll be where my duty is."

"You forget, you have a duty to yourself," I said.

"Ay, man?" she replied, pounding at the dough; "will you have found that in the Bible, now?"

"Mary," I said solemnly, "you must not laugh at me just now. God knows I am in no heart for laughing. Right or wrong, we have to marry. If we could get your father with us, it would be best; but, with him or without him, I want you far away from here, my girl; for your own sake, and for mine, ay, and for your father's too, I want you far—far away from here. I came with other thoughts; I came here as a man comes home; now it is all changed, and I have no desire nor hope but to flee—for that's the word—flee, like a bird out of the fowler's snare, from this accursed island."

She had stopped her work by this time.

"And do you think, now," said she, "do you think, now, I have neither eyes nor ears? Do ye think I havenae broken my heart to have these brows (as he calls them, God forgive him!) thrown into the sea? Do ye think I have lived with him, day in, day out, and not seen what you saw in an hour or two? No," she said, "I know there's wrong in it; what wrong, I neither know nor want to know. There was never an ill thing made better by meddling, that I could hear of. But, my lad, you must never ask me to leave my father. While the breath is in his body, I'll be with him. And he's not long for here, either: that I can tell you, Charlie—he's not long for here. The mark is on his brow; and better so—maybe better so."

I could never rightly tell the reason; but at this, like a poor child, I began to cry. She came over to me, and put her hand upon my shoulder kindly.

"Charlie," she said, "what's right for me, neednae be right for you. There's sin upon this house, and trouble; you are a stranger—though well loved, I tell you that; take your things upon your back and go your ways to better places and to better folk. It'll not be me that blames you, Charlie. If you were ever minded to come back, though it were twenty years from now, you would be blythe and

welcome still ; and there's not a soul in Aros but would say the same with me."

"Mary Ellen," I said, "I asked you to be my wife, and you said, yes. That's done for good. Wherever you are, I am ; whatever you wish, I wish ; as I shall answer to my God."

As I said the words, the wind suddenly burst out raving, and then seemed to stand still and shudder around the house of Aros. It was the first squall, or prologue, of the coming tempest, and as we started and looked about us, we found that a gloom, like the approach of evening, had settled round the house.

"God pity all poor folks at sea!" she said. "We'll see no more of your uncle, poor man, till the morrow's morning."

And then she told me, as we sat by the fire and hearkened to the rising gusts, of how this change had fallen upon her father. All last winter he had been dark and fitful in his mind. Whenever the Roost ran high, or, as Mary said, whenever the Merry Men were dancing, he would lie out for hours together on the Head, if it were at night, or on the top of Aros by day, watching the tumult of the sea, and sweeping the horizon for a sail. After February 11, when the wealth-bringing wreck was cast ashore at Sandag, he had been at first unnaturally gay, and his excitement had never fallen in degree, but only changed in kind from dark to darker. He neglected his work, and kept Rorie idle. They two would speak together by the hour at the gable end, in guarded tones and with an air of secrecy and almost of guilt ; and if she questioned either, as at first she sometimes did, her inquiries were put aside with confusion. Since Rorie had first remarked the fish that hung about the ferry, his master had never set foot but once upon the mainland of the Ross. That once—it was in the height of the springs—he had passed dryshod while the tide was out ; but, having lingered overlong on the far side, found himself cut off from Aros by the returning waters. It was with a shriek of agony that he had leaped across the gut, and he had reached home thereafter in a fever-fit of fear. A fear of the sea, a constant haunting thought of the sea, appeared in his talk and devotions, and even in his looks when he was silent.

Rorie alone came in to supper ; but a little later my uncle appeared, took a bottle under his arm, put some bread in his pocket, and set forth again to his outlook, followed this time by Rorie. I heard that the schooner was losing ground, but the crew were still fighting every inch with hopeless ingenuity and courage ; and the news filled my mind with blackness.

A little after sundown the full fury of the gale broke forth, such a gale as I have never seen in summer, nor, seeing how swiftly it had come, even in winter. Mary and I sat in silence, the house quaking overhead, the tempest howling without, the fire between us sputtering with raindrops. Our thoughts were far away with the poor fellows on the schooner, or my not less unhappy uncle, houseless on the promontory ;

and yet ever and again we were startled back to ourselves, when the wind would rise and strike the gable like a solid body, or suddenly fall and draw away, so that the fire leaped into flame and our hearts bounded in our sides. Now the storm in its might would seize and shake the four corners of the roof, roaring like Leviathan in anger. Anon, in a lull, cold eddies of tempest moved shudderingly in the room, lifting the hair upon our heads and passing between us as we sat. And again the wind would break forth in a chorus of melancholy sounds, hooting low in the chimney, wailing with flutelike softness round the house.

It was perhaps eight o'clock when Rorie came in and pulled me mysteriously to the door. My uncle, it appeared, had frightened even his constant comrade; and Rorie, uneasy at his extravagance, prayed me to come out and share the watch. I need not say I hastened to do as I was asked; the more so, as, what with fear and horror, and the electrical tension of the night, I was myself restless and disposed for action. I told Mary to be under no alarm, for I should be a safeguard on her father; and, wrapping myself warmly in a plaid, I followed Rorie into the open air.

The night, though we were so little past midsummer, was as dark as January. Intervals of a groping twilight alternated with spells of utter blackness; and it was impossible to trace the reason of these changes in the flying horror of the sky. The wind blew the breath out of a man's nostrils; all heaven seemed to thunder overhead like one huge sail; and, when there fell a momentary lull on Aros, we could hear the gusts dimly sweeping in the distance. Over all the lowlands of the Ross, the wind must have blown as fierce as on the open ocean; and God only knows the uproar that was raging around the head of Ben Kyaw. Sheets of mingled spray and rain were driven in our faces. All round the isle of Aros the surf, with an incessant, hammering thunder, beat upon the reefs and beaches. Now louder in one place, now lower in another, like the combinations of orchestral music, the constant mass of sound was hardly varied for a moment. And loud above all this hurly-burly I could hear the changeful voices of the Roost and the intermittent roaring of the Merry Men. At that hour, there flashed into my mind the reason of the name that they were called. For the noise of them seemed almost mirthful, as it out-topped the other noises of the night; or, if not mirthful, yet instinct with a portentous joviality. Nay, and it seemed even human. As when savage men have drunk away their reason, and, discarding speech, bawl together in their madness by the hour; so, to my ears, these deadly breakers shouted by Aros in the night.

Arm in arm, and staggering against the wind, Rorie and I won every yard of ground with conscious effort. We slipped on the wet sod, we fell together sprawling on the rocks. Bruised, drenched, beaten, and breathless, it must have taken us near half an hour to get from the house down to the Head that overlooks the Roost. It was there, it seemed, that was my uncle's favourite observatory. Right in the face of it,

where the cliff is highest and most sheer, a hump of earth, like a parapet, makes a place of shelter from the common winds, where a man may sit in quiet and see the tide and the mad billows contending at his feet. As he might look down from the window of a house upon some street disturbance, so, from this post, he looks down upon the tumbling of the Merry Men. On such a night, of course, he peers upon a world of blackness, where the waters wheel and boil, where the waves joust together with the noise of an explosion, and the foam towers and vanishes in the twinkling of an eye. Never before had I seen the Merry Men thus violent. The fury, height, and transiency of their spoutings was a thing to be seen and not recounted. High over our heads on the cliff rose their white columns in the darkness; and the same instant, like phantoms, they were gone. Sometimes three at a time would thus aspire and vanish; sometimes a gust took them, and the spray would fall about us, heavy as a wave. And yet the spectacle was rather maddening in its levity than impressive by its force. Thought was beaten down by the confounding uproar; a gleeful vacancy possessed the brains of men, a state akin to madness; and I found myself at times following the dance of the Merry Men as it were a tune upon a jiggging instrument.

I first caught sight of my uncle when we were still some yards away in one of the flying glimpses of twilight that chequered the pitch darkness of the night. He was standing up behind the parapet, his head thrown back and the bottle to his mouth. As he put it down, he saw and recognised us with a leap and a toss of one hand fleeringly above his head.

“Has he been drinking?” shouted I to Rorie.

“He will aye be drunk when the wind blaws,” returned Rorie in the same high key, and it was all that I could do to hear him.

“Then—was he so—in February?” I inquired.

Rorie’s “Ay” was a cause of joy to me. The murder, then, had not sprung in cold blood from calculation; it was an act of madness no more to be condemned than to be pardoned. My uncle was a dangerous madman, if you will, but he was not cruel and base as I had feared. Yet what a scene for a carouse, what an incredible vice, was this that the poor man had chosen! I have always thought drunkenness a wild and almost fearful pleasure, rather demoniacal than human; but drunkenness, out here in the roaring blackness, on the edge of a cliff above that hell of waters, the man’s head spinning like the Roost, his foot tottering on the edge of death, his ear watching for the signs of shipwreck, surely that, if it were credible in any one, was morally impossible in a man like my uncle, whose mind was set upon a damnatory creed and haunted by the darkest superstitions. Yet so it was; and, as we reached the bight of shelter and could breathe again, I saw the man’s eyes shining in the night with an unholy glimmer.

“Eh, Charlie, man, it’s grand!” he cried. “See to them!” he continued, dragging me to the edge of the abyss from whence arose that

deafening clamour and those clouds of spray; "see to them dancin', man! Is that no wicked?"

He pronounced the word with gusto, and I thought it suited with the scene.

"They're yowlin' for thon schooner," he went on, his thin, insane voice clearly audible in the shelter of the bank, "an' she's comin' aye nearer, aye nearer, aye nearer an' nearer an' nearer; an' they ken't, the folk kens it, they ken weel it's by wi' them. Charlie, lad, they're a' drunk in yon schooner, a' dizened wi' drink. They were a' drunk in *Christ-Anna*, at the hinder end. There's nane could droon at sea, wantin' the brandy. Hoot awa, what do you ken?" with a sudden blast of anger. "I tell ye, it cannae be; they daurnae droon without it. Ha'e," holding out the bottle, "tak' a sowp."

I was about to refuse, but Rorie touched me as if in warning; and indeed I had already thought better of the movement. I took the bottle, therefore, and not only drank freely myself, but contrived to spill even more as I was doing so. It was pure spirit, and almost strangled me to swallow. My kinsman did not observe the loss, but, once more throwing back his head, drained the remainder to the dregs. Then, with a loud laugh, he cast the bottle forth among the Merry Men, who seemed to leap up, shouting to receive it.

"Ha'e, bairns!" he cried, "there's your han'sel. Ye'll get bonnier nor that, or morning."

For a moment, he stood stupefied; then, the whisky working in his brain, he began to gesticulate, and to bow, and to step to and fro, and back and forward, in a sort of formless dance. We could hear him accompany his movements, now with a snatch of a sea drinking-song; now, as he bettered the pace, with such cries as young men utter in a reel; and now, as again he moved more slowly, with old Scottish psalm tunes and verses of the Psalms of David. Sometimes a gust would strike and almost overthrow him; sometimes great, lashing sprays fell upon us and hid him from our sight; and again, in a lull, we could hear the words of his song, and see him modulate his steps and gestures to the air.

Suddenly, out in the black night before us, and not two hundred yards away, we heard, at a moment when the wind was silent, the clear note of a human voice. Instantly the wind swept howling down upon the Head, and the Roost bellowed, and churned, and danced with a new fury. But we had heard the sound, and we knew, with agony, that this was the doomed ship now close on ruin, and that what we had heard was the voice of her master issuing his last command. My uncle, too, had heard it, and had ceased his dance. He, and I, and Rorie, crouching together on the edge, waited, straining every sense, for the inevitable end. It was long, however, and to us it seemed like ages, ere the schooner suddenly appeared for one brief instant, relieved against a tower of glimmering foam. I still see her reefed mainsail flapping loose,

as the boom fell heavily across the deck ; I still see the black outline of the hull, and still think I can distinguish the figure of a man stretched upon the tiller. Yet the whole sight we had of her passed swifter than lightning ; the very wave that disclosed her fell burying her for ever ; the mingled cry of many voices at the point of death rose and was quenched in the roaring of the Merry Men. And with that the tragedy was at an end. The strong ship, with all her gear, and the lamp perhaps still burning in the cabin, the lives of so many men, precious surely to others, dear, at least, as heaven to themselves, had all, in that one moment, gone down into the surging waters. They were gone like a dream. And the wind still ran and shouted, and the senseless waters in the Roost still leaped and tumbled as before.

How long we lay there together, we three, speechless and motionless, is more than I can tell, but it must have been for long. At length, one by one, and almost mechanically, we crawled back into the shelter of the bank ; and there my own emotion was relieved by tears. As I lay against the parapet, wholly wretched and not entirely master of my mind, I could hear my kinsman maundering to himself in an altered and melancholy mood. Now he would repeat to himself with maudlin iteration, " Sic a fecht as they had—sic a sair fecht as they had, puir lads, puir lads ! " and anon he would bewail that " a' the gear was as gude's tint," because the ship had gone down among the Merry Men instead of stranding on the shore ; and throughout, the name—the *Christ-Anna*—would come and go in his divagations, pronounced with shuddering awe. The storm all this time was rapidly abating. In half an hour the wind had fallen to a breeze, and the change was accompanied or caused by a heavy, cold, and plumping rain. I must then have fallen asleep, and when I came to myself, drenched, stiff, and unrefreshed, day had already broken, grey, wet, discomfortable day ; the wind blew in faint and shifting capfuls, the tide was out, the Roost was at its lowest, and only the strong beating surf round all the coasts of Aros remained to witness of the furies of the night.

CHAPTER V.

A MAN OUT OF THE SEA.

RORIE set out for the house in search of warmth and breakfast ; but my uncle was bent upon examining the shores of Aros, and I felt it part of my duty to Mary to accompany him throughout. He was now docile and quiet, but tremulous and weak in mind and body ; and it was with the eagerness of a child that he pursued his exploration. He climbed far down upon the rocks ; on the beaches, he pursued the retreating breakers. The merest broken plank or rag of cordage was a treasure in his eyes to

be secured at the peril of his life. To see him, with weak and stumbling footsteps, expose himself to the pursuit of the surf, or the snares and pitfalls of the weedy rock, kept me in a perpetual terror. My arm was ready to support him, my hand clutched him by the skirt, I helped him to draw his pitiful discoveries beyond the reach of the returning surf; a nurse accompanying a child of seven would have had no different experience.

Yet, weakened as he was by the reaction from his madness of the night before, the passions that smouldered in his nature were those of a strong man. His terror of the sea, although conquered for the moment, was still undiminished; had the sea been a lake of living flames, he could not have shrunk more panically from its touch; and once, when his foot slipped and he plunged to the midleg into a pool of water, the shriek that came up out of his soul was like the cry of death. He sat still for a while, panting like a dog, after that; but his desire for the spoils of shipwreck triumphed once more over his fears; once more he tottered among the curded foam; once more he crawled upon the rocks among the bursting bubbles; once more his whole heart seemed to be set on driftwood, fit, if it was fit for anything, to throw upon the fire. Pleased as he was with what he found, he still incessantly grumbled at his ill-fortune.

"Aros," he said, "is no a place for wrecks ava'—no ava.' A' the years I've dwalt here, this ane maks the second; and the best o' the gear clean tint!"

"Uncle," said I, for we were now on a stretch of open sand, where there was nothing to divert his mind, "I saw you last night, as I never thought to see you—you were drunk."

"Na, na," he said, "no so bad as that. I had been drinking, though. And to tell ye the God's truth, it's a thing I cannae mend. There's nae soberer man than me in my ord'nar; but when I hear the wind blaw in my lug, it's my belief that I gang gyte."

"You are a religious man," I replied, "and this is sin."

"Ou," he returned, "if it wasnae sin, I dinna ken that I would care for't. Ye see, man, it's defiance. There's a sair spang o' the auld sin o' the warld in yon sea; it's an unchristian business at the best o't; an' whiles when it gets up, an' the wind skreighs—the wind an' her are a kind o' sib, I'm thinkin'—an' thae Merry Men, the daft callants, blawin' and lauchin', and pair souls in the deid thraws warstlin' the leelang nicht wi' their bit ships—weel, it comes ower me like a glamour. I'm a deil, I ken 't. But I think naething o' the pair sailor lads; I'm wi' the sea, I'm just like ane o' her ain Merry Men."

I thought I should touch him in a joint of his harness. I turned me towards the sea; the surf was running gaily, wave after wave, with their manes blowing behind them, riding one after another up the beach, towering, curving, falling one upon another on the trampled sand. Without, the salt air, the scared gulls, the wide-spread army of the sea-chargers, neighing to each other, as they gathered together to the assault

of Aros ; and close before us, that line on the flat sands that, with all their number and their fury, they might never pass.

“ Thus far shalt thou go,” said I, “ and no further.” And then I quoted as solemnly as I was able a verse that I had often before fitted to the chorus of the breakers :

“ But yet the Lord that is on high,
Is more of might by far,
Than noise of many waters is
As great sea billows are.”

“ Ay,” said my kinsman, “ at the hinder end, the Lord will triumph ; I dinnae misdoobt that. But here on earth, even silly men-folk dare Him to His face. It is nae wise ; I amnae sayin’ that it’s wise ; but it’s the pride of the eye, and it’s the lust o’ life, an’ it’s the wale o’ pleesures.”

I said no more ; for we had now begun to cross a neck of land that lay between us and Sandag ; and I withheld my last appeal to the man’s better reason till we should stand upon the spot associated with his crime. Nor did he pursue the subject. But he walked beside me with a firmer step. The call that I had made upon his mind acted like a stimulant ; and I could see that he had forgotten his search for worthless jetsom, in a profound, gloomy, and yet stirring train of thought. In three or four minutes we had topped the brae and begun to go down upon Sandag. The wreck had been roughly handled by the sea ; the bow had been spun round and dragged a little lower down ; and perhaps the stem had been forced a little higher, for the two parts now lay entirely separate on the beach. When we came to the grave, I stopped, uncovered my head in the thick rain, and, looking my kinsman in the face, addressed him.

“ A man,” said I, “ was in God’s providence suffered to escape from mortal dangers ; he was poor, he was naked, he was wet, he was weary, he was a stranger ; he had every claim upon the bowels of your compassion ; it may be that he was the salt of the earth, holy, helpful, and kind ; it may be he was a man laden with iniquities to whom death was the beginning of torment. I ask you in the sight of heaven : Gordon Darnaway, where is the man for whom Christ died ? ”

He started visibly at the last words ; but there came no answer, and his face expressed no feeling but a vague alarm.

“ You were my father’s brother,” I continued ; “ you have taught me to count your house as if it were my father’s house ; and we are both sinful men walking before the Lord among the sins and dangers of this life. It is by our evil that God leads us into good ; we sin, I dare not say by His temptation, but I must say with His consent ; and to any but the brutish man, his sins are the beginning of wisdom. God has warned you by this crime ; He warns you still by the bloody grave between our feet ; and if there shall follow no repentance, no improvement, no return to Him, what can we look for but the following of some memorable judgment ? ”

Even as I spoke the words, the eyes of my uncle wandered from my face. A change fell upon his looks that cannot be described; his features seemed to dwindle in size, the colour faded from his cheeks, one hand rose waveringly and pointed over my shoulder into the distance, and the oft-repeated name fell once more from his lips: "The *Christ-Anna!*"

I turned; and if I was not appalled to the same degree, as I return thanks to Heaven that I had not the cause, I was still startled by the sight that met my eyes. The form of a man stood upright on the cabin-hutch of the wrecked ship; his back was towards us; he appeared to be scanning the offing with shaded eyes; and his figure was relieved to its full height, which was plainly very great, against the sea and sky. I have said a thousand times that I am not superstitious; but at that moment, with my mind running upon death and sin, the unexplained appearance of a stranger on that sea-girt, solitary island filled me with a surprise that bordered close on terror. It was not possible that any human soul should have come ashore alive in such a sea as had raged last night along the coasts of Aros; and the only vessel within miles had gone down before our eyes among the Merry Men. I was assailed with doubts that made suspense unbearable; and to put the matter to the touch at once, stepped forward and hailed the figure like a ship.

He turned about, and I thought he started to behold us. Then he stooped and clasped his hands, as if in supplication. At this my courage instantly revived; and I called and signed to him to draw near. He dropped immediately to the sands, and began slowly to approach, with many stops and hesitations, crouching and clasping his hands, and making a world of gesticulative signals. At each repeated mark of the man's uneasiness, I grew the more confident myself; and I advanced another step, encouraging him as I did so with my head and hand. It was plain the poor castaway had heard indifferent accounts of our island hospitality; and indeed, about this time, the people further north had an indifferent reputation.

"Why," I said, "the man is black!"

And just at that moment, in a voice that I could scarce have recognised, my kinsman began swearing and praying in a mingled stream. I looked at him; he had fallen on his knees, his face was agonised; at each step of the castaway's, the pitch of his voice rose, the volubility of his utterance and the fervour of his language redoubled. I call it prayer, for it was addressed to God; but surely no such ranting incongruities were ever before addressed to the Creator by a creature; surely if prayer can be a sin, this mad harangue was sinful. I ran to my kinsman, I seized him by the shoulders, I dragged him to his feet.

"Silence, man," said I, "respect your God in words, if not in action. Here, on the very scene of your transgressions, He sends you an occasion of atonement. Forward and embrace it; welcome like a father you creature who comes trembling to your mercy."

With that, I tried to force him towards the negro; but he felled me

to the ground, burst from my grasp, leaving the shoulder of his jacket, and fled up the hillside towards the top of Aros like a deer. I staggered to my feet again, bruised and somewhat stunned; the negro had paused in surprise, perhaps in terror, some half-way between me and the wreck; my uncle was already far away, bounding from rock to rock; and I thus found myself torn for a time between two duties. But I judged, and I pray Heaven that I judged rightly, in favour of the poor wretch upon the sands; his misfortune was at least not plainly of his own creation; it was one besides that I could certainly relieve; and I had begun by that time to regard my uncle as an incurable and dismal lunatic. I advanced accordingly towards the negro, who now awaited my approach with undisguised alarm. As I came nearer, I held out my hand; and the poor creature ran to it, kissed it, and placed it on his heart, breaking at the same time into a torrent of words that were incomprehensible to me. My eyes filled with tears, partly at his gratitude, partly at thought of the far different scene in February; but I signed to my castaway that I was unable to comprehend him, and tried him with a few words, first of English and then of Gaelic, in vain. It was plain that we should have to rely upon the language of looks and gestures; and I was reminded of a book that I had read, *Robinson Crusoe*, where, upon an island in a far part of the world, another Englishman relates difficulties of the same nature with another negro. I motioned him to follow me, which he readily did. As we passed the grave, I paused and raised my eyes and hands to heaven in token of respect and sorrow for the dead. As if to show that he understood me, he fell at once upon his knees and appeared to offer up a prayer, looking up when he had done, nodding and smiling, with an irreverence that somewhat shocked my notions of religion. Then he turned, pointed to my uncle, whom we could just see perched upon the top of Aros, and touched his head, to indicate that he was mad.

I was anxious if possible to discover whether he had belonged to the schooner. We took the long way round the shore, for I feared to excite my uncle if we struck across the island; and as we walked, I had time enough to mature the little dramatic exhibition by which I hoped to satisfy my doubts. Accordingly, pausing on a rock, I proceeded to imitate before the negro the action of the man whom I had seen the day before taking bearings with the compass at Sandag. He understood me at once. Nodding and smiling, he took the imitation out of my hands, showed me where the boat was, pointed out seaward as if to indicate the position of the schooner, and then down along the edge of the rock with the words "Espirito Santo," strangely pronounced, but clear enough for recognition. I had thus been right in my conjecture; the pretended historical inquiry had been but a cloak for treasure-hunting; the man who had played on Dr. Robertson was the same as the foreigner who visited Grisapol in spring, and now, with many others, lay dead under the Roost of Aros: there had their greed brought them, there should

their bones be tossed for evermore. In the meantime the negro continued his imitation of the scene, mingling and distinguishing the different parts with what seemed to me the talent of an actor, now looking up skyward as though watching the approach of the storm; now, in the character of a seaman, waving the rest to come aboard; now as an officer, running along the rock and entering the boat; and anon bending over imaginary oars with the air of a hurried boatman. Lastly, he indicated to me, by a pantomime not to be described in words, how he himself had gone up to examine the stranded wreck, and, to his grief and indignation, had been deserted by his comrades. Throughout the performance, for I can call it nothing else, he assumed in turn the port and the grimace of every character he represented; now strutting and turning out his toes, now squinting and hanging the lip, so that, had I known the parties, or even seen them nearer hand, I might have recognised each as he appeared.

The mystery of his presence being thus solved for me, I explained to him by means of a sketch the fate of the vessel and of all aboard her. He showed no surprise and, I thought, little sorrow; his gestures seemed to indicate a philosophical acquiescence in the laws of nature and the common fate of man; and next moment he had picked a flower and was trying to explain to me, as I thought I gathered, some virtue latent in the plant, now in words, now by vigorous pantomime, smiling the while from ear to ear.

There was something in this poor castaway that engaged my affectionate interest. For all his height, which was almost gigantic, and his strength and activity, which seemed truly formidable, he appealed to me rather as a child than as a full-grown man. In our necessary pantomime, he plainly found the relish of play; his eye and his mind were continually wandering; and I have never seen any one who smiled so often or so brightly. Even his black face was beautified; and before we reached the house of Aros I had entirely conquered the first repulsion of his looks.

To Mary I told all that had passed without suppression, though I own my heart failed me; but I did wrong to doubt her sense of justice.

"You did the right," she said. "God's will be done." And she set out meat for us at once.

As soon as I was satisfied, I bade Rorie keep an eye upon the castaway, who was still ravenously eating, and set forth again myself to find my uncle. I had not gone far before I saw him sitting in the same place, upon the very topmost knoll, and seemingly in the same attitude as when I had last observed him. From that point, as I have said, the most of Aros and the neighbouring Ross would be spread below him like a map; and it was plain that he kept a bright look-out in all directions, for my head had scarcely risen above the summit of the first ascent before he had leaped to his feet and turned as if to face me. I hailed him at once, as well as I was able, in the same tones and words

as I had often used before, when I had come to summon him to dinner. He made not so much as a movement in reply. I passed on a little further, and again tried parley with the same result. But when I began a second time to advance, his insane fears blazed up again, and still in dead silence, but with incredible speed, he began to flee from before me along the rocky summit of the hill. An hour before, he had been dead weary, and I had been comparatively active. But now his strength was recruited by the fervour of insanity, and it would have been vain for me to dream of pursuit. Nay, the very attempt, I thought, might have inflamed his terrors, and thus increased the miseries of our position. And I had nothing left but to turn homeward and make my sad report to Mary.

She heard it, as she had heard the first, with a concerned composure, and, bidding me lie down and take that rest of which I stood so much in need, set forth herself in quest of her misguided father. At that age it would have been a strange thing that put me from either meat or sleep; I slept long and deep; and it was already long past noon before I awoke and came downstairs into the kitchen. Mary, Rorie, and the negro castaway were seated about the fire in silence; and I could see that Mary had been weeping. There was cause enough, as I soon learned, for tears. First she, and then Rorie, had been forth to seek my uncle; each in turn had found him perched upon the bill-top, and from each in turn he had silently and swiftly fled. Rorie had tried to chase him, but in vain; madness lent a new vigour to his bounds; he sprang from rock to rock over the widest gullies; he scoured like the wind along the hill-tops; he doubled and twisted like a hare before the dogs; and Rorie at length gave in; and the last that he saw, my uncle was seated as before upon the crest of Aros. Even during the hottest excitement of the chase, even when the fleet-footed servant had come, for a moment, very near to capture him, the poor lunatic had uttered not a sound. He fled, and he was silent, like a beast; and this silence had terrified his pursuer.

There was something heart-breaking in the situation. How to capture the madman, how to feed him in the meanwhile, and what to do with him when he was captured, were the three difficulties that we had to solve.

"The negro," said I, "is the cause of this attack. It may even be his presence in the house that keeps my uncle on the hill. We have done the fair thing; he has been fed and warmed under this roof; now I propose that Rorie put him across the bay in the coble, and take him through the Ross as far as Grisapol."

In this proposal Mary heartily concurred; and bidding the black follow us, we all three descended to the pier. Certainly, Heaven's will was declared against Gordon Darnaway; a thing had happened, never paralleled before in Aros; during the storm, the coble had broken loose, and, striking on the rough splinters of the pier, now lay in four feet of

water with one side stove in. Three days of work at least would be required to make her float. But I was not to be beaten. I led the whole party round to where the gut was narrowest, swam to the other side, and called to the negro to follow me. His terror at the idea was extreme; the more I insisted, the more abject became his signals of reluctance and petition; and when at last, weary with the whole business, I swam back again to Aros, he greeted my arrival with the most speaking pantomime of affection, submission, and gratitude for his escape. †

“Poor lamb,” said Mary, “he durstn’t. And I’ll tell ye one thing, Charlie Darnaway: whether he was sent here in Heaven’s anger or Heaven’s mercy, I would think shame upon the house of Aros if we drove him forth. Man, or bairn, or beast, I hardly can tell which to think him, he shall have a seat at the fireside and a spoon at the table for me.”

Even Rorie was of much the same way of thinking. “He will be a fine, canny body at all,” was his opinion of the negro; and I can hardly explain how glad I was to hear their verdict. Perhaps his special gratitude to myself had touched me; but I have never felt a more affectionate pity for any creature calling himself man. Indeed, in the long hours that followed, he began to show a sympathy with our sorrow and an intelligent understanding of its cause and nature, that endeared him equally to all. I could never reproduce in words the series of fantastic gestures and grimaces by which he managed to explain his meaning; it was a strange business, and made stranger by the glee and the noisy laughter with which he perceived he had been understood. He must have closely and thoughtfully observed our comings and goings, and the behaviour of the maniac on the hill; for, absurd as it may seem, we owed to his suggestion the simple and obvious plan by which food was conveyed to my uncle. Acting, as he had done before, two parts in succession, he climbed the hill with a basket in the character of Rorie, observed him from the hilltop in that of the madman; came higher as Rorie, ran away as my uncle; as Rorie, left the basket on the summit and descended to the house; returned as my uncle to his perch, and, finding the basket, opened it with every sign of joy, and supped with the most laughable and unnecessary details, such as licking the lips and fingers or smacking gluttonously with the mouth.

It was like a ray of light to the rest of us, and no sooner understood than put in execution. Rorie carried it out, Rorie speechless in admiration of the negro. From that moment, in fact, the Hebridean servant began to regard our castaway with eyes of singular respect, like some odd sort of collie, especially intelligent and kind. And it is here, among all these events, that I can see most plainly the mark of the hand of God. Judging by guess, I should have thought this superstitious old fellow would have held the stranger in the extreme degree of horror.

But his superstitions were of another order; he had not been fed in youth, like my uncle among the Cameronians, on tales of the devil appearing in the similitude of a black man, and, with cozening words and specious pretexts, luring men to ruin. It was rather as an animal than as a fiend that Rorie thought of our visitor; and as he found him more and more human in his ways, he came more and more both to admire and condescend.

Again my uncle was visible on his perch; again he fled in silence. But food and a great cloak were at least left for his comfort; the rain, besides, had cleared away, and the night promised to be even warm. We might compose ourselves, we thought, until the morrow; rest was the chief requisite, that we might be strengthened for unusual exertions; and as none cared to talk, we separated at an early hour. The black once more embraced and kissed my hand with the same humble gratitude. He even offered to follow me, but when I signed to him to stay with Rorie, he cheerfully obeyed, nodding and smiling to his new companion.

I lay long awake, planning a campaign for the morrow. I was to place the negro on the side of Sandag, whence, with his remarkable agility, he should head my uncle towards the house; Rorie in the west, I on the east, were to complete the cordon, as best we might. It seemed to me, the more I recalled the configuration of the island, that it should be possible, though hard, to force him down upon the low ground along Aros Bay; and once there, even with the strength of his madness, ultimate escape was hardly to be feared. It was on his terror of the negro that I relied; for I made sure, however he might run, it would not be in the direction of the man whom he supposed to have returned from the dead, and thus one point of the compass at least would be secure.

When at length I fell asleep, it was to be awakened shortly after by a dream of wrecks, black men, and submarine adventure; and I found myself so shaken and fevered that I arose, descended the stair, and stepped out before the house. Within Rorie and the black were snoring together in the kitchen; outside was a wonderful clear night of stars, with here and there a cloud still hanging, last stragglers of the tempest. It was near the top of the flood, and the Merry Men were roaring in the windless quiet of the night. Never, not even in the height of the tempest, had I heard their song with greater awe. Now, when the winds were gathered home, when the deep was dandling itself back into its summer slumber, and when the stars, the countless regents of the moon, rained their gentle light over land and sea, the voice of these tide-breakers was still raised for havoc. They seemed, indeed, to be a part of the world's evil and the tragic side of life. Nor were their meaningless vociferations the only sounds that broke the silence of the night. For I could hear, now shrill and thrilling and now almost drowned, the note of a human voice that accompanied the uproar of the Roost. I knew it for my kinsman's voice; and a great fear fell upon me of

God's judgments, and the evil in the world. I went back again into the darkness of the house as into a place of shelter, and lay long upon my bed, pondering these mysteries.

It was late when I again awoke, and I leaped into my clothes and hurried to the kitchen. No one was there; Rorie and the black had both stealthily departed long before; and my heart stood still at the discovery. I could rely on Rorie's heart, but I placed no trust in his discretion. If he had thus set out without a word, he was plainly bent upon some service to my uncle. But what service could he hope to render even alone, far less in the company of the man in whom my uncle found his fears incarnated? Even if I were not already too late to prevent some deadly mischief, it was plain I must delay no longer. With the thought I was out of the house; and often as I have run on the rough sides of Aros, I never ran as I did that fatal morning. I do not believe I put twelve minutes to the whole ascent.

My uncle was gone from his perch. The basket had indeed been torn open and the meat scattered on the turf; but, as we found afterwards, no mouthful had been tasted; and there was not another trace of human existence in that wide field of view. Day had already filled the clear heavens; the sun already lighted, in a rosy bloom, upon the crest of Ben Kyaw; but all below me the rude knolls of Aros and the shield of sea lay steeped in the clear darkling twilight of the dawn.

"Rorie!" I cried; and again, "Rorie!" My voice died in the silence, but there came no answer back. If there were indeed an enterprise afoot to catch my uncle, it was plainly not in fleetness of foot, but in dexterity of stalking, that the hunters placed their trust. I ran on further, keeping the higher spurs, and looking right and left, nor did I pause again till I was on the mount above Sandag. I could see the wreck, the uncovered belt of sand, the waves idly beating, the long ledge of rocks, and on either hand the tumbled knolls, boulders, and gullies of the island. But still no human thing.

At a stride the sunshine fell on Aros, and the shadows and colours leaped into being. Not half a moment later, below me to the west, sheep began to scatter as in a panic. There came a cry. I saw my uncle running. I saw the black jump up in hot pursuit; and before I had time to understand, Rorie also had appeared, calling directions in Gaelic as to a dog herding sheep.

I took to my heels to interfere, and perhaps I had done better to have waited where I was, for I was the means of cutting off the madman's last escape. There was nothing before him from that moment but the grave, the wreck, and the sea in Sandag Bay. And yet Heaven knows that what I did was for the best.

My uncle Gordon saw in what a direction, horrible to him, the chase was driving him. He doubled, darting to the right and left; but, high as the fever was in his veins, the black was still the swifter. Turn where he would, he was still forestalled, still driven toward the scene of

his crime. Suddenly he began to shriek aloud, so that the coast echoed; and now both I and Rorie were calling on the black to stop. But all was vain, for it was written otherwise. The pursuer still ran, the chase still sped before him screaming; they avoided the grave, and skimmed close past the timbers of the wreck; in a breath they had cleared the sand; and still my kinsman did not pause, but dashed straight into the surf; and the black, now almost within reach, still followed swiftly behind him. Rorie and I both stopped, for the thing was now beyond the hands of men, and these were the decrees of God that came to pass before our eyes. There was never a sharper ending. On that steep beach they were beyond their depth at a bound; neither could swim; the black rose once for a moment with a throttling cry; but the current had them, racing seaward; and if ever they came up again, which God alone can tell, it would be ten minutes after, at the far end of Aros Roost, where the sea-birds hover fishing.

NOTE: In the first part, Ben Kyaw was accidentally printed Ben Ryan.

French Prisons and Convict Establishments.

I.

TEN years ago a commission was appointed to study the French penal system with a view to remedying a number of abuses which had sprung up in the management of prisons and of convict establishments. The labours of the commission were related in a very lengthy and exhaustive report, admirably written, as such works always are in France. The author was an Academician, Count d'Haussonville, who, having skilfully grouped his facts to demonstrate in the most readable way possible the evils of the old system, submitted a long series of suggestions which he confidently hoped would result in making France's prisons and convict establishments superior to those of all other nations. The National Assembly lost no time in adopting the suggestions of the report, and passing them into law; but the consequences by no means fulfilled the expectations of the commissioners. The French penal system seemed all at once to have got into a tangle; and now that the new system has been in operation nearly ten years, one may say that the tangle is worse than ever.

By "tangle" we mean this, that the penalties for the most heinous kinds of offences were found to be so much more lenient than those for crimes of the second category that prisoners sentenced to *reclusion*, which was the second class punishment, and involved solitary confinement, began to make murderous assaults on their gaolers in order to incur transportation to New Caledonia. Transportation is supposed to be the heavier punishment; but in truth it is incomparably lighter. Parliament grew alarmed at length by the epidemic of crime in the home penitentiaries; and in 1880 an Act was passed decreeing that transportation should no longer be inflicted for crimes committed within prison walls. This, however, was only an acknowledgment of the fact that transportation had altogether failed as a deterrent; and now this anomaly remains, that a burglar convicted of a first offence may get a sentence of eight years' solitary confinement, which will almost kill him, whereas a thrice convicted burglar will be treated to a sentence of ten years' transportation, which will be no hardship to him at all. If he behaves tolerably well, he will in three or four years get a ticket-of-leave enabling him to establish himself as a free colonist in New Caledonia, and to marry. If he be already married, Government will send out his wife and children to him free of expense. So humanitarian a spirit presided over the framing of rules for the penal colony of New Caledonia that many a

villanous murderer sent out there under a life sentence found his punishment practically reduced to one of comfortable banishment. The governor was allowed absolute discretion as to the award of ticket-of-leave; and human nature being what it is, one may well suppose that well-connected criminals found it easy to bring such influences to bear upon him as considerably lightened their punishment. At this moment several murderers whose crimes appalled the public—but who escaped the guillotine owing to the squeamishness of juries and of M. Grévy about capital punishment—are pleasantly settled at New Caledonia as free farmers, tradesmen, or artisans. One of them keeps a café; another—a poisoner—has set up as a schoolmaster. One must not presume to say that the governors of New Caledonia—for there have been several during ten years—were wrong to treat these men kindly if they showed themselves penitent; but it is quite certain that the prospect of living with one's wife and family on a free grant of land in a healthy climate is not likely to strike terror into the minds of the criminal classes as being an excessive punishment. The guillotine and solitary confinement have much more effectual terrors; and it is an undeniable fact that since transportation has been rendered so mild crimes of the worst kind, both against person and property, have alarmingly increased.

They have increased so much that M. Gambetta, and a large section of the Republican party, wish to get a law passed by which all criminals convicted for the second time, and no matter what the length of their sentences may be, shall, after the expiration of those sentences, spend the remainder of their lives in New Caledonia. This drastic measure would, no doubt, relieve Paris of the greater portion of its very large horde of habitual criminals; but it would not affect the question as to the leniency of transportation under the present system as compared with *reclusion*. So long as men are more lightly punished for serious crimes than for those of a less atrocious sort, it is evident that justice is not well armed against malefaction.

In a former article on "French Assizes" we alluded to the vagaries of juries in finding "extenuating circumstances" for prisoners on merely sentimental grounds; and also to the unequal apportionment of penalties by reason of the arbitrary rules which commit certain offenders to be tried before juries, whilst others are sent before the judges of the Correctional Courts, who sit without juries and scarcely ever acquit because they judge according to the strict letter of the law. We pointed out that a husband who gave an unfaithful wife a severe beating would almost certainly be imprisoned by Correctional judges, whereas if he killed his wife outright he would assuredly be acquitted by an assize jury. Such anomalies may be witnessed in a multitude of other cases. The French Code divides offences against the common law into *crimes* (felonies) and *délits* (misdemeanours); but this distinction, which was found inconvenient in England, and which has been practically obliterated there since misdemeanants (*e.g.* the Tichborne claimant) can be sentenced to

fourteen years' penal servitude as well as felons—this distinction remains an important one in France, where a misdemeanant can only be tried in a Correctional Court, whose maximum sentence is five years' imprisonment. And the French legal definitions of *felonies* and *misdemeanours* are often most unsatisfactory from the moral point of view.

A man wishing to steal fowls clambers over a garden-wall at night, and breaks into a fowl-house. He has a bludgeon or crowbar in his hands, but makes no use of it to inflict bodily hurt on those who capture him. Nevertheless, this man is a felon who has committed a burglary with the *quatre circonstances aggravantes*, i.e. in the night, with *escalade* (climbing over walls), with *effraction* (breaking open a door), and *à main armée* (with a weapon in his hand). He can only be tried at the assizes, and, if convicted on the four counts, must get eight years' *reclusion*, or twenty years' transportation. On the other hand, take a man who by false pretences obtains admission to a house or shop, intending to commit a robbery there. He lays hands on some valuables, and, being surprised in the act, catches up a poker and knocks his detector down, inflicting a serious wound. This man's crime is evidently worse than that of the other who went after the fowls: he is only a misdemeanant, however, for he gained admittance to the house *without violence*, and was unarmed; his catching up the poker, although it may have been a premeditated act inasmuch as he intended from the first to defend himself somehow if caught, was, equally speaking, only an act of *impulse* committed on the spur of the moment and without *malice prepense*. Therefore this man can only be tried by a Correctional Court, and cannot get more than five years' imprisonment. Again, if a man, wishing to inflict on an enemy some grievous bodily harm, walks into a café, says a few angry words to him, and disfigures him by smashing a decanter upon his face, it is a misdemeanour, extenuated by the apparent absence of premeditation. The man walked into the café unarmed, and in the heat of quarrel picked up the first weapon that came to his hand. It might fairly be alleged that the man knew he should find a decanter in the café, and that his quarrel was purposely entered into; but the law will not take account of this. If, on the contrary, the man entered his enemy's house with a loaded stick in his hand and assaulted his enemy with that stick, he would be a felon who must go to the assizes on a charge of attempted murder. It might be that the man had taken the stick without reflecting that it had a leaden knot; but the *onus* of proving that his intentions were not murderous, and that in fact when he entered the room he did not even purpose to commit a common assault, would rest upon himself. A jury would probably judge his case according to his antecedents, and if it were shown that his past life was not blameless, he might fail to get *extenuating circumstances*, and might receive twenty years' transportation.

These oddities in criminology render it impossible for people to determine what precise degree of infamy attaches to this or that sentence.

In a general way the public thinks more badly of a man who is sentenced to *travaux forcés* (transportation) than of one who is merely sent to prison ; but there is very little faith current as to the scales of justice being evenly balanced, and Frenchmen as a rule feel very indulgently towards all criminals except those whose offences are characterised by savage cruelty. What is more, the people are so accustomed to see the Government act according to its good pleasure that public opinion exercises no control over the treatment of offenders when they have been put into prison. In England every newspaper reader knows pretty well what is the *régime* of convicts under sentence of penal servitude, and of prisoners in ordinary gaols, and it would surprise the public considerably to hear that such and such a man, owing to his having influential friends, was being treated with exceptional favour. In France such a thing would cause no surprise. Count d'Haussonville's report recommended that prisoners of rank or fortune should be treated exactly like humble culprits ; but though this was agreed to in principle, it has been but little carried out in practice. Revolutions and other political changes produce so many misdemeanours in high life, cause so many fraudulent bankruptcies, bring into gaols so many men of high standing who have dabbled in bubble companies, that the stigma of imprisonment is not felt as it is in England. The Courts sentence an ex-cabinet minister to imprisonment for swindling, but the very term *escroquerie* is smoothed down in his case into *abus de confiance*, and the authorities connive with prison governors in making the lot of the interesting victim as easy to bear as possible. He is not made to serve out his whole sentence. Sometimes he does not serve out any portion of it. After his sentence he is informed that the Public Prosecutor will send him a summons to surrender after his appeal has been heard : but the Public Prosecutor omits to send that summons. He sends a friend instead, who advises the well-connected delinquent to travel for a few months or years, as the case may be, and the public, who know very little of what goes on in the gaols, are none the wiser. Those who know shrug their shoulders, "*C'est tout naturel,*" they say, "*il est riche : il a le bras long.*"

One may therefore premise that in the treatment of prisoners within French prisons, *maisons centrales* (penitentiaries), and convict establishments, the one thing lacking is uniformity.

II.

Readers of French law reports will notice that the judges of Correctional Courts often inflict sentences of *thirteen* months' imprisonment. It makes all the difference to a prisoner whether he gets twelve or thirteen months, for in the former case he may serve out his time in the local house of detention and correction, whereas in the latter event he is consigned to a *maison centrale* or penitentiary. What is more, if, being

sentenced to twelve months, he likes to undergo his punishment in cellular confinement, one quarter of it will be remitted, so that in many cases a sentence of twelve months means one of nine only. Prisoners sent to the *maisons centrales* have no option as to the manner in which they shall serve their terms, as they are made to work under the associated silent system.

In Paris there are five prisons for male offenders, one for boys, the Petite Roquette, and one for women, St. Lazare. The chief of the male prisons, La Grande Roquette, is only used as a *dépôt* for convicts under sentence of transportation or reclusion; and the prison in the Rue du Cherche-Midi is for soldiers. Mazas is the House of Detention for prisoners awaiting trial, but it also contains about 800 prisoners undergoing sentences of not more than one year's duration. Ste. Pélagie and La Santé are houses of correction where the associated system mostly prevails, and the latter is at the same time a general infirmary. All convicted prisoners who are diseased, infirm, and who require continual medical attendance, are sent to the Santé.

It rests with the Public Prosecutor and not with the judges to determine in what prison a delinquent sentenced by the Correctional Courts shall be confined. Herein favouritism comes largely into play. A prisoner of the lower orders, having no respectable connections, will not get the option of serving his time in solitary confinement, and thereby earning a remittance. If he petitions for this favour, he will be told that there are no cells vacant, and he will be removed to Ste. Pélagie or the Santé, where he will sleep in a dormitory and work in an associated *atelier*. If he be a shoemaker or tailor, he will work at his own trade; if not, he will be employed in making brass chains, cardboard boxes, paper bags, toys or knick-knacks for vendors of those thousand trifles which are comprised under the designation *articles de Paris*. Being paid by the piece, he will have every inducement to work hard. Of his earnings Government will retain one-third towards the expenses of his keep; one-third will be put aside and paid to him on his discharge, while the remaining third will be paid to him in money to enable him to buy little luxuries at the prison canteen. The things purchasable at the canteen are wine at the rate of a pint and a half a day, *café au lait*, chocolate, butter, cheese, ham, sausages, eggs, butter, salad, fruit, tinned meat, biscuits, stationery, tobacco and snuff. Prisoners are allowed to smoke in Parisian gaols, and a very sensible provision this is, for it prevents that illicit traffic in tobacco which brings so many prisoners and warders to trouble in English prisons, and it also supplies a ready means of punishing a refractory prisoner. Frenchmen decline to admit that order cannot be kept in a gaol without corporal punishment. As a rule French prisoners behave exceedingly well, because they know that they can greatly alleviate the hardships of their position by so doing. For a first offence, a man's tobacco and wine will be cut off for a week; for a second he may be forbidden to purchase anything at the canteen for a

month ; if he perseveres in his folly he will be prohibited from working, that is, from earning money, and will be locked up in a cell to endure the misery of utter solitude and idleness. If this severe measure fails and the man becomes obstreperous, he will be strait-waistcoated and put into a dark padded cell where he may scream and kick at the walls to his heart's content. To these rational methods of coercion the most stubborn natures generally yield. It must be confessed, however, that there are certain desperate characters who delight in giving trouble, and who, untamed by repeated punishments, will often commit murderous assaults upon warders, chaplain, or governor out of sheer bravado. It would really be a mercy to flog these men, for a timely infliction of the lash would frighten them into good behaviour, and often save them from the worse fate of lifelong reclusion. It has not been found practicable to abolish the lash in convict establishments, and since it continues in use there no sound reason can exist for not introducing it into gaols.

There are no cranks or treadwheels in French prisons. These barbarous methods for wasting the energies of men in unprofitable labour are condemned by the good sense of a people who hold that it is for the public interest as well as for the good of the prisoners themselves that men in confinement should be so employed as to make them understand the blessedness of honest labour. In their treatment of untried prisoners, too, the French are much more humane than we. What can be more cruel and foolish than to force an untried man, who may be innocent, to spend several months in complete idleness, as is done in England? A Frenchman who has a trade that can be followed in prison may work at it in his cell, pending his trial, as if he were at home. Journeymen tailors, shoemakers, watchmakers, gilders, carvers, painters on porcelain and enamel, &c., continue working for their employers (unless, of course, they are desperate men whom it would be dangerous to trust with tools), and it is a touching sight enough on visiting days to see the prisoners send out little parcels of money for their wives from whom they are separated by gratings. The same sight can be witnessed in the prisons for convicted offenders. Many prisoners will deny themselves every luxury procurable at the canteen in order to give the whole of their earnings to their wives.

Mazas is the favourite prison of Parisians, because the rules are less strict there than in the other places, and because a sojourn there always involves a remission of at least one-fourth, and sometimes one-half, of the sentence. Prisoners of respectable appearance or of good education, and prisoners well connected, can generally induce the authorities to let them undergo their punishment at Mazas. There are no associated rooms here; each prisoner has his own cell, and is supposed to spend his time in solitary confinement. The supposition is correct in most cases, but the better sorts of prisoners are generally favoured with some appointment in the prison which allows them to ramble about the place as they like. Some are assistants in the surgery, infirmary, library; others keep the

prison accounts; others act as gardeners, clerks in the store room, interpreters, and letter writers for illiterate prisoners. All these berths are paid at the rate of sixty centimes to a franc a day, and Government levies nothing from it. The pay is given out to berth-holders in its entirety every ten days. Equally well paid are some of the berths held by skilled cooks and mechanics, locksmiths, plumbers, painters, carpenters, stokers, &c.

The convicted prisoners at Mazas have the privilege of wearing their own linen, boots, watches, and neckties; they are not cropped, and may sport their face hair in what style they like. They may also have their own books sent in to them, and may receive money from their friends to the extent of a franc per diem. The prison dress is a dark pepper-and-salt suit, with no marks or badge of infamy about it; but the governor may at his discretion excuse a prisoner from wearing it. In fact, the governor can do anything. He may allow a prisoner to dress in his own clothes, have his meals brought in from a restaurant, and walk about the prison grounds all day on the pretext that he is employed in prison work. There are no visiting justices to trouble him. Prison inspectors come round every three months, but the time of their arrival is always known beforehand, and they discharge their duties in the most perfunctory way, scarcely occupying a couple of hours in the inspection of a building that contains 1,200 cells.

III.

It has been said that any sentence of imprisonment exceeding a year relegates a man to a *maison centrale*. These penitentiaries are very grim places, affording none of the alleviations to be met with in houses of correction. To begin with, the manner of a man's transfer from Paris to a *maison centrale* is most grievous. He goes with a chain fastened round his left leg and right wrist; he is shaved and cropped, attired in a yellow prison suit, and he travels in a cellular railway carriage. At the penitentiary there is no respect of persons, or at least very little. The prisoners are divided into two categories—those sentenced simply to imprisonment and the *réclusionnaires*. The former are treated very much like the inmates of Parisian prisons on the associated system, except that they are not allowed to smoke. They sleep together in dormitories of fifty, and work together at making cardboard boxes, list shoes, lamp shades, and other such things. Their earnings seldom exceed 75 centimes a day, and of this they get one-third to spend inside the prison. In Paris the number of letters which a prisoner may write, and the number of visits he may receive in a year from his friends, are points which depend a good deal on the pleasure of the governor. In the penitentiaries there is a hard and fast line, allowing only one letter and one visit every three months.

The *réclusionnaires* lead very miserable lives of absolute solitude.

As men over sixty years of age are not transported, a sentence of penal servitude (*travaux forcés*), which would mean transportation for a man of fifty-nine, becomes *reclusion* for one of sixty. Cripples are also denied the favour of transportation; and, as already said, prisoners who have committed murderous assaults on warders in hopes of being shipped to New Caledonia are now kept in the *maisons centrales*, under life-sentences. The rest of the reclusionary contingent is made up of men whose offences are, from the legal point of view, one degree less heinous than those of transported convicts. Reclusion is generally inflicted for terms of five, eight, or ten years; and it is a fearful punishment, because the convict has no means of diminishing it by earning good marks to obtain a ticket-of-leave. Remissions of sentence are granted on no fixed principle. Every year the governor of the prison makes out a list of the most deserving among those of his prisoners who have served out at least half their terms, and he forwards it to the Ministry of Justice. There the *dossier* of each man recommended is carefully studied by the heads of the criminal department, and, two-thirds of the names being eliminated, the remaining third are submitted to the Minister of Justice. His Excellency makes further elimination, so that, out of a list of twenty sent up by the governor of the penitentiary, probably two convicts obtain a full pardon, while two or three others get a remission. It is obvious that there must be a good deal of haphazard in this method of proceeding, and that a convict who has no friends stands a poor chance of getting his case properly considered by Government. But even were the system administered as honestly as possible, there would be a strong objection to it, in that it would make the convict's chance of remission depend more upon his conduct before his sentence than after it. This is just what ought not to be the case. The convict should be made to feel that from the day of his sentence he commences quite a new life, and will be treated for the future according to the conduct he leads under his altered circumstances.

Five years of reclusion are quite as much as a man can bear without having his intellectual faculties impaired for life. Men of very excitable temperament, and those who have been accustomed to work out of doors, often fall into a decline after two years' confinement, and die before completing their third year. Those who remain eight or ten years in reclusion sink into something like imbecility, and seldom live long after their discharge. Advocates of the cellular system point to Belgium, where there is no transportation, and where every man sentenced to penal servitude serves his time in solitary confinement; but the Belgian system is much mitigated by the system of marks. To begin with, every Belgian convict has two-fifths of his sentence struck off at once, simply because he is supposed to adopt cellular punishment from choice, though, since the old *bagnes* have been abolished, the option which convicts formerly had no longer exists. In the next place, the Belgian convict

knows that by unremitting industry and good conduct he can earn marks enough to reduce the remainder of his sentence by half; and he has thus the most powerful incentive to good behaviour and hopefulness. There is no possibility of cheating the man out of the liberty he earns. On entering the prison he gets a balance sheet, upon which he enters a regular debtor and creditor account with the Government: so many marks earned represent so many days of liberty won. Thus, a man sentenced to twenty years sees his sentence at once reduced by eight years on account of the cellular system; and it then becomes his own business to reduce the remaining term of twelve years to six. At this rate it will be seen that a Belgian sentence of five years is no very terrible matter, especially when it is remembered that by a merciful provision of the Code the time which a convict has spent in prison before his sentence is deducted from the term of that sentence. Therefore, supposing a five-year man had been three months in gaol before sentence, and both worked and behaved extremely well after his conviction, he might be out in fifteen months.

There is a short cut out of French penitentiaries, too; but it is such a dirty one that the authorities ought to be ashamed of themselves for encouraging men to take it. A moderately intelligent *réclusionnaire* who has served half his time, or even less sometimes, may, on his private demand, become a *mouton*, or spy prisoner. He is subjected to certain tests, with a view to ascertaining whether he is sharp, and whether he can be depended upon; and if he successfully passes through these ordeals (to which he is put without being aware of it) he is forwarded to some House of Detention, or to the Préfecture de Police in Paris, where he is employed to worm secrets out of prisoners awaiting trial. To do this he must assume all sorts of parts, and sometimes assume disguises; and he carries his life in his hands, for he occasionally has to deal with desperadoes who would show him no mercy if they suspected his true character. All this unsavoury work does not give the man his full liberty; but he may range freely within the prison boundaries. He is well paid, and he is generally allowed to go out on parole for a couple of hours every week. In the end, he gets a year or two struck off his sentence; but after his discharge he generally remains an informal spy and hanger-on of the police, and it need scarcely be said that of all spies he is generally the most rascally and dangerous. It is fellows of his kind who lead men into planning burglaries so as to earn a premium for denouncing them. They are foremost in all street brawls and seditions, playing the part of *agents provocateurs*, and privately noting down the names of victims whom they will get arrested by-and-by. They are, in fact, a detestable race, and it cannot be wondered at that when detected by the *pals* whom they dupe they should be killed like vermin.

IV.

French female prisoners and convicts are treated with more kindness, on the whole, than persons of their class are in England. Their matrons and warderesses are Augustine nuns, whose rule, though firm, is gentler, more merciful, and more steadfastly equitable than that of laywomen could be. The female convicts are allowed the same privileges as the men in the matter of earning money and buying things at the canteen. Those of them who are young also enjoy a privilege not granted to female convicts in other countries—that of having husbands provided for them by the State.

Only these husbands must be convicts. Every six months a notice is circulated in the female penitentiaries, calling upon all women who feel minded to go out to New Caledonia and be married, to make an application to that effect through the Governor. Elderly women are always very prompt in making such applications; but they are not entertained. The matrimonial candidates must be young, and exempt from physical infirmities. Girls under long sentences readily catch at this method of escaping from the intolerable tedium of prison life; and the pretty ones are certain to be put on the Governor's list, no matter how frightful may be the crimes for which they have been sentenced. The only moral qualification requisite is to have passed at least two years in the penitentiary.

The selected candidates have to sign engagements promising to marry convicts and to settle in New Caledonia for the remainder of their lives. On these conditions, Government transports them, gives them a decent outfit, and a ticket-of-leave when they land at Noumea. Their marriages are arranged for them by the governor of the colony, who has a selection of well-behaved convicts ready for them to choose from; and each girl may consult her own fancy within certain limits, for the proportion of marriageable men to women is about three to one. Of course, if a girl declares that none of the aspirant bridegrooms submitted to her inspection have met with her approval, the governor can only shrug his shoulders in the usual French way. It has happened more than once that pretty girls have been wooed by warders, free settlers, or time-expired soldiers and sailors, instead of by convicts. In such cases, the governor can only assent to a marriage on condition that the female convict's free lover shall place himself in the position of a ticket-of-leave man, and undertake never to leave the colony. Love works wonders; and there is no instance on record of a man having refused to comply with these conditions when once he had fallen in love. There are some instances, though, of the authorities having declined to let a female convict marry a free man, when they were not convinced that the latter was a person of firm character and kindly disposition. For the women's own sakes it is necessary that they should not be married to men who

would be likely, in some moment of temper, to fling their disreputable antecedents into their teeth. There is nothing of this kind to fear when a female convict gets wedded to a man whose past life has been as bad as her own.

Why the French Government should have saddled itself with the responsibility of promoting marriages among convicts it is difficult to say; but the experiment has on the whole yielded very good results. The married couples get huts and free grants of land, and all that they can draw from it by their own labour becomes theirs. During five years they are subjected to the obligation of reporting themselves weekly at the district police office; and they are forbidden to enter public-houses, and must not be found out of doors at night. This probationary period being satisfactorily passed, they get their full freedom, but subject always to the condition of remaining in the colony. To this rule the law has distinctly forbidden that any exception shall be made. On no account whatever must convicts who have accepted grants of land and contracted "administrative marriages," as they are called, ever return to France. They are at liberty, however, to send their children to France if any respectable person in that country will become answerable for them, and undertake to provide them with a good education. The sons of convicts are born French subjects, and will be required at the age of twenty to draw at the conscription, and serve their appointed terms in the army.

From what precedes it may be inferred that the lot of convicts in New Caledonia is a fairly pleasant one; but we have spoken as yet only of those convicts who have tickets-of-leave, and are more or less free to roam over the whole island. Those who have not earned tickets-of-leave are kept in the penal settlement of the Island of Nou, or are employed on public works, road-making, house-building, &c., in gangs, moving and encamping from place to place during the fine season under military escort. The lot even of these convicts cannot be called a hard one as compared with that of convicts in other countries, and of French convicts under the old system of *bagnes*, or transportation to Cayenne. The climate of Cayenne was so deadly that all the convicts transported there either died or contracted incurable maladies. As for the old *bagnes* of Brest and Toulon, they were very hells, where the convicts were kept chained in couples, and were treated pretty much like wild beasts. The climate of New Caledonia, on the contrary, is delightful, and the soil of the different islands composing the colony is so fertile that corn, fruit, and vegetables grow there in abundance, and can be had very cheap. In 1873 an attempt to cultivate vines was commenced; but hitherto the experiment has not met with full success. It is said, however, that the difficulties which have beset the vine-growers will be overcome in time.

We are aware that the accounts given of New Caledonia by political convicts like M.M. Henri Rochefort and Paschal Grousset have been

very unfavourable ; but the statements of these gentlemen must be accepted with reserve. The National Assembly in 1872 most unwisely decided that the political convicts—13,000 in number—should not be compelled to work ; and the consequence was that, living in idleness, and being anxious to give the authorities as much trouble as possible, they suffered from the disorder and general squalor which they created. On arriving in the colony they grumbled at finding no huts prepared for their reception ; they grumbled at having uncooked rations served out to them, alleging that the governor in obliging them to cook was violating the law which exempted them from work ; they grumbled again because they had to find their own fuel in the woods instead of seeing fatigue parties of soldiers told off to pick up sticks for them. All this naturally angered the governor ; who, perceiving that the Communists were bent on teasing him, retaliated by visiting all breaches of rules with rigour. M. Henri Rochefort was once sentenced to a week's imprisonment for being absent at the daily calling over of names, and a great hubbub was made over this affair when the news of it reached Paris, for it was asserted, erroneously, that M. Rochefort had only missed answering his name because he was ill in bed with ague. Many Radical writers took this opportunity of declaring that the climate of New Caledonia was pestilential, and that every convict caught the ague on landing. As a matter of fact, M. Rochefort never had a day's illness in the colony ; and ague is quite unknown there.

Successive amnesties have relieved New Caledonia of its troublesome political population, and no difficulty is experienced in maintaining order among the ordinary convicts. For some time after their arrival they are detained in the Island of Nou, where they sleep by gangs of twenty in huts ; and they wear convict garb, which is as follows—red blouse and green cap, with fustian trousers, for those under life sentences ; green blouse and red cap for those whose sentences range between ten and twenty years ; green blouse and brown cap for those whose sentences amount to less than ten years. They are not chained in couples ; but those who work in gangs at road-making have a chain with a four-pound shot fastened to their left ankles, unless they be men who have earned a good conduct badge, in which case they work unshackled. Ticket-of-leave convicts of both sexes must during their probationary terms of five years wear their pewter good conduct badges ; but they may dress as they like. It should be remarked that the rule forbidding probationers to enter public-houses is an excellent one, for it keeps them out of the way of temptation at the most critical point of their careers.

The convicts get paid for all the work they do ; one half their earnings being handed to them every ten days, whilst the other half is set aside to provide them with a little capital when they get their tickets-of-leave. By good conduct they may also earn prizes in money. A good conduct stripe brings a franc per month ; two stripes, 1 franc 50 centimes ; and a good conduct badge, which entitles the holder to a ticket-of-leave

when he has worn it a year, brings 2 francs 50 centimes a month during that year. By this judicious system of pay and rewards the men are kept in good subordination, and it is seldom that the severer kinds of punishment have to be inflicted.

These punishments are deprivation of pay, confinement in cells, and for certain serious offences, such as mutiny or striking officers, the lash. Formerly convicts were flogged for attempting to escape, but this was put a stop to by the National Assembly in 1875. Flogging is administered with a rope's end on the bare back, the minimum of lashes being twelve, and the maximum fifty. It is the governor alone who has power to order flogging. The penalty for murder would of course be death; but it is rather a significant fact, worth the attention of those who allege that capital punishment has no deterrent effect, that not a single execution has taken place in the colony. It would seem that even the most desperate criminals manage to exercise self-control when they know that murder will bring them, not before a sentimental squeamish jury, but before a court martial which will have them guillotined within forty-eight hours.

The colony of New Caledonia is under the control of the Ministry of Marine and the Colonies, which generally has an admiral at its head. The Ministry of Justice has nothing to do with it, as the convicts all live under martial law. Tickets-of-leave, however, seem to be given at the discretion of the Governor; and it would be strange indeed if out there, as in France, favouritism did not play a large part in the distribution of these rewards. Favouritism is, in fact, the great blemish of the French penal system. It smirches every part of it; it obliterates all laws; it is the occasion of the most crying acts of injustice. How it works in New Caledonia may be judged from the case of a man named Estoret, the manager of a large lunatic asylum at Clermont, who was sentenced to transportation for life in 1880 for the brutal murder of a poor idiot. Estoret happened to be a consummate agriculturist, and his fame in that respect preceded him to New Caledonia. The governor, being very anxious to develop the resources of his colony, soon found that Estoret would be just the man to help him. He accordingly appointed him chief overseer of farms, leaving him practically free to roam over the whole colony on parole. Estoret was never even put into convict dress, and he was not compelled to wear a badge, for he had had no time to earn one. He was rendered perfectly free almost from the day of his landing, and appears to have done excellent work in his superintendence of the farms. His case shows, however, that the governor possesses the somewhat dangerous prerogative of reducing judicial sentences to nothing. Such a prerogative may no doubt be exercised at times to the great advantage of the colony, but occasionally it must be fraught with serious abuses.

In fairness one should conclude by saying that New Caledonia seems at present to be doing well; and that merchants who trade with it are beginning to speak hopefully of its future as a prosperous colony.

A Deserted Garden.

At all times of the year the garden is left solitary and alone. It is quite at the end of a long lovely country lane that passes it by, leading away to the open heath and the dip in the range of hills that means the sea. No one could tell that the garden was there, for a long row of silent trees keeps guard over it, and seems as if it formed a thick wall expressly to keep out intruders. In the lane, in spring-time, can be seen the most marvellous collection of mosses; and as the tiny brown bubbling stream that crosses and re-crosses the road, and makes melody at all times of the year, runs its course, it passes by deep dells carpeted with the fine fern-moss, every tiny frond like a perfect fern, and every morsel of a different shade of colour, until finally it seems to be lost in the garden, which it truly enters, but does not there appear above ground. But we find it again in the open heath, where it sparkles mightily among its dark surroundings, and goes on its way, doubtless to join the bigger river below the hills. Just by the garden the brook is obstructed by a moss-grown branch of a tree, so small that any stronger stream would have brushed it away long ago, but this thread of water is too tiny, and only becomes for a while a miniature whirlpool of froth, in which go round and round wee acorn-cups, pine-needles, or the shiny stiff beech leaf, that in spring is being reluctantly displaced by the new comer; then the stream itself creeps under the branch, and after a very little way goes into the garden. There is an old gate, green with age, that we come upon in an unexpected corner of the lane; sometimes tall nettles and campions stand in quite a little hedge along the bottom of the gate, like a rank of lank weedy soldiers guarding the entrance, while here and there a blossom peeps through one of the upright slats of the gate that is only hanging by one rusty hinge; true, the other, at the lower part, is there, but it only holds out a ragged end that catches the raiment of the unwary, or grates with a harsh cry against the gate as we open it, and, regardless of the agony we cause several spiders, and of the destruction to the flowers, enter the garden. The latch is gone; a piece of wire twisted together takes its place, and has to be re-twisted round the post before we can go on; and as we pause, as we always do just there, we note the bright sunshine in the lane, filtering through the crooked oak-branches that form a canopy and almost meet, and then look at the contrast of the dense gloom just behind us, where, even in spring and summer, cool damp and dark chilliness replace the warmth and colour we find outside. As we linger we can see what used to be carefully-kept gravel

paths, now closely dressed in a mossy green slippery robe that moves under our tread; while the beds, that once were gay with a thousand highly-cultivated blossoms, are now deep in weeds, and only to be discerned from the grass itself by moss-grown stones that had marked the borders, but that now are rapidly disappearing into the ground. In the winter it is comparatively easy to see where the garden has been originally, and almost to say positively where my Lady has walked, pensive at evening, watching the rooks fly home across a lovely sunset sky to the trees below the hills where they have built since time memorial. We can almost trace her footsteps as she went down past the clipped yews long since gone back to their original shape, yet even now grotesquely displaying an occasional resemblance to the peacocks or strange mysterious creatures they were once supposed to resemble; towards the big gates, that are entirely gone, and are only seen by those who from a couple of moss-covered square stones can mentally erect a stately portico crowned by the crest of the family, whose very name now no longer survives. In winter there is very little undergrowth; the tall bracken below the pine-trees on the mound to the left of the garden has died down into a brown shabby carpet; the lank grasses and lush verdure in the garden itself have vanished; the hedges are no longer entwined with bindweed and hops and the fantastical clematis, but are bare and slender, and allow us to see where the kitchen garden once was, and where the square beds before the Manor were long ago filled with rare bulbs from Holland, or with lovely homely flowers whose presence would now be scouted by a head-gardener who "respected himself," and are only to be found in cottage gardens, or in those belonging to folks who rise superior to the riband-bordering abominations of the present day. In the spring the first signs of life come on the thin brown willows, here the stir of the sap is first seen, and then they are decked with the soft grey-velvet palms, that when partly out, and watched at a distance, seem to flush to pink, though there is not a shade of that colour upon them when we are close to the trees on which they grow. Then they are golden when ready to give place to the leaf, which comes far too soon generally, and robs us of the palms before we realised their existence. The kitchen garden is a strange medley: there are tumbled-down portions of the wall still left, that evidently formed the stay for stores of plums, and perhaps of peaches; and in the crevices grow tall wall-flowers, a very small yellow or brown blossom on the top of a thin long stalk, while the glossy dark-green foliage of the periwinkle climbs all over, and bestows upon us a very occasional grey-blue blossom, as if to show what it could do if only we would allow it a little more light and air. The ivy, a little later, puts out pale green shoots, that in autumn have curious leaves, all lined and patterned with red and yellow; and in one place a white-veined leaf every now and then comes out, to show us where to find that curious ivy that seems to have little feet to climb over everything, and requires no nailing to the

wall it honours with its presence. Every crevice of the wall has a moss to fill it up, and red lichens, and yellow ones too, that in spring suddenly acquire with the rest of creation an indescribable access of colour, do their best to dress the place gaily, and make up as far as they can for the loss of all care or all culture that the garden experiences. Gooseberry and currant bushes still abound; an unexpected strawberry leaf marks where the strawberries once doubtless existed in profusion; but though the apple-trees have a very occasional apple still on them, the only fruit besides that we can find is the hard blue sloe, that takes all taste from the roof of the mouth, or tightens the skin of the lips with its acrid taste, or a red-faced crab, of which it is impossible to think without a shudder. At the bottom of the garden is a hedge that in spring is covered with the white bloom of the blackthorn, and here a thrush regularly builds her nest, while in the arm of a moss-grown apple-tree overhanging it we find the lovely home of the chaffinch so like the tree itself that it requires very practised eyes indeed to see it at all. We doubt whether we should ever have done so, but the birds in the garden are so tame that they are less cautious than those outside, and allow us to see many of their little ways that a less unsophisticated bird would carefully hide from every human being; and we watch the chaffinch feed her babies, or see the sparrows talk to each other in the nasty snappy manner possessed by all sparrows, or note the distant and haughty way in which thrushes exchange remarks, until we feel if we only had a little more time we might begin to understand all they say to each other, for we are quite convinced they talk, and talk intelligently on all subjects that are found of interest in the bird world.

In all our visits to the garden we have never come upon a single trace of the house, and we can only imagine where it may have stood by the presence of the more elaborately designed arrangement of flower-beds, where sometimes, in autumn especially, we find a rare blossom that we have seen in no other place, and have no name for. We are loth to take other better instructed folks to our retreat, for fear it may become common, and be no longer the place of refuge from all mankind that it is at present. One is a large, pale, yellow, globe-like flower, transparent and tremulous. It looks like a soap-bubble, so frail and lovely is it; and another is pink, and hangs pensively on a stem that seems too fragile to hold it up properly. However, these are very seldom seen; sometimes the plants come up bearing no flower, and sometimes we are afraid they have gone entirely away; but last year they were there safe enough, and it remains for this autumn to show us if they are still extant. Here also we find in spring great clumps of wall-flowers, an occasional meagre single hyacinth, its white or pink spikes looking curious indeed among the maze of blue-bells that crowd all over, and make the open part of the garden look at times as if a blue cloth were laid there for some fairy gambols, or as if it were in readiness for an al-fresco party who were about to be entertained thereon; while

marvellous tawny polyanthus and thin red-stained primroses contrast strangely with the pale-yellow blossom of their wilder sisters. There are one or two alleys between beech-hedges, where the brown leaf hangs persistently until the new foliage comes in spring, and here there are ever sheltered and warm walks. They all lead in one direction from different starting-points, and through them we reach the brown knoll, surrounded by a ditch and a peat wall, where the fir-trees live, and where we can see all over the heath, and follow the course of the little grey river until it widens out beyond the mouth of the harbour to the open sea itself. Can anxious-eyed maidens or matrons have used this place as a watch-tower, we wonder, long, long before the beech-woods were made; from whence they could gaze on the wide expanse before them for lover or husband returning to them from fighting the Danes in yonder marshes, or from hunting with the king along the hills, parting with him at the gate of the great square castle that stands in the gap or "corfe" from which it takes its name? For from thence they could see the long red road, and the high causeway between the meadows, or turning inland could watch the other roads that led from the county town, or, farther away still, from the capital itself. Naturally we cannot tell; but the voice that sighs perpetually through the pine-trees seems essentially the voice of the past, and has a mournful way of interpreting Nature, who seems to confide her secrets to it, secure in her knowledge that no mortal is able to discern the meaning thereof. Is she at rest, and reveling in the golden silence of autumn?—the wind in the pines croons a perfect lullaby. Does she crave for sympathy in winter, when storms rend her, and the rain comes dashing down?—the pines creak and sway and croon as they lean down towards her, as if to show they shared her agony. In spring the song is one of hope; while in summer the aromatic shade is made vocal by the music that replaces the song of birds, for among a pine-wood it is rare to hear anything save the scream of a jay, the coo of a wild pigeon, or the twitter of a bird as it pauses there before pursuing its flight. To hear the songs of thrushes or blackbirds you must return to the garden; there they sing on, undaunted by the gloom and damp and decay, and even a nightingale has been known to build there; and then at late evening the whole lane resounds with the marvellous willowy music. But the saddest and most suggestive corner in the whole garden is a small plot portioned into six square pieces; it is away from where we suppose the house to have been, and is not too near the kitchen garden. On all sides it is surrounded by a thick hedge, and at one end is a gate that has once had a lock on it; while at the other is a tumbled-down summer-house, in the thatched roof of which numberless sparrows build unchecked, while under the eaves a house-marten last summer made a residence, and successfully reared a large and promising brood. Can we not see this was the children's corner? Surely this plot rather larger and at the head of the rest belonged to some elder sister, who may have sat here working her

sampler, and keeping one eye on her own property and the other on the conduct of the little ones, who were doubtless toiling away at their gardens, digging up, perchance, more flowers than weeds.

Absurd as it may seem, and waste of time as it doubtless is—for very likely the flowers we notice may have been planted by him or her who owns the garden now, and may have never been seen by our hypothetical maiden—we cannot help thinking as we sit here that she must have been a gentle, patient child; most like a blue-eyed creature, with soft brown hair and pleasing expression of countenance, for we find at different times the bell-like lily of the valley, the homely hen and chicken daisy, clumps of lavender, and many old-fashioned flowers whose names we have quite forgotten. Then in one corner is a myrtle, that sometimes flowers, for here it is warm and very sheltered, and by the summer-house it gets the sun; and we cannot help believing that she planted it for her bridal wreath, and we wish her happiness—ay, almost while we laugh at our own folly. Next to her we find the Scotch briar rose, with its yellow buttons blossoming out freely; or find red and white strong-scented prickly creatures, scattering their leaves generously at every breeze that blows; and we think of the owner of this plot as a child of strong character, well able to work her way through the world that existed outside the garden, and so do not trouble about her at all. Another had an undecided owner, evidently. Here is a big old gooseberry bush, gnarled and venerable, and taking up a great deal too much room; while wild parsley smothers the one or two blossoming plants that still come up by fits and starts, and a curious bean-like climber twines all over what was once a handsome standard-rose. And so going on through the six, we like to fancy all sorts of different children owning the garden; and we must confess to a thrill of rapture when in the summer-house we came upon some roughly-cut initials and six different notches by one of the windows, that at once represented to us the divers heights of those whose kingdom this once was. Alas! no date was appended, only the mere dents and cuts that made the letters; and we could only feel our children a little more real, even while we had to confess they were no more tangible than they had been before our discovery. Away from the children's corner there is a deep silent pool, sometimes covered with duckweed, and then later on fringed with tall grasses and rushes, that lean down and look into it, as if they tried in vain to discern its secret. There is never a ripple on its surface, and it always appears to us as if all the long past history of the garden had been confided to its keeping; and, that being so, it would never betray its trust. Surely many a tempest-tossed soul has gazed into the water, and found help and peace in contemplating the intense quiet and unruffled face of the pool. And, indeed, the whole garden is a storehouse of fancies and unwritten stories legible enough to those who know it well, and often wander therein. It is entirely out of the world, and so peaceful and restful that it is like an unsuspected church in a silent corner in London, into which you may

enter from the hot, noisy, summer streets, and at once be in an atmosphere scented, cool, and prayerful; in which you may rest awhile, neither praying nor even thinking, yet inexpressibly refreshed by the few moments' retreat from the noise and glare of the city. And though the lane which represents the city to us is neither noisy nor hot, it is yet outside the garden and open to intruders, who in winter come for the holme, or holly, from which it takes its name; or in spring and early summer for the golden scented cowslip that springs ever freely in a broad bright field, beyond which lie three or four un-named tombstones, discovered long ago, when the little church was built that crowns the lane. Perhaps some of our six children sleep there unmovingly through all the lapse of years: perhaps the elder sister, whose bridal wreath may after all have been woven for her marriage with death alone, there found balm for her broken heart! But it is all speculation. Nothing lasts, save the immortal range of hills beyond the garden, that are now as when the garden was in its prime; and as we stand at the gate, and try to avoid the rusted hinge that always stays us while we retwist the wire fastening, and prepare to plunge into the world again, we seem to part with a multitude of ghosts, who doubtless, when the moon rises high in the sky, walk hand in hand in the garden, and talk mournfully together of the days when they and it were in their prime.

Whitehall, Past and Future.

I.

PLACES, long familiarity with which has caused us to look upon them with indifference, perhaps almost with the proverbial contempt, may regain all their wonted interest under new conditions. A general conflagration, for example, might clothe with a weird charm even the stuccoed wilderness of Pimlico, while an upheaval of Nature (if we had experience of such things in these latitudes) might toss the squalid ugliness of Seven Dials into something like wild beauty. Anyhow, new conditions lend new charms even to what has become wearisome to us; and if this be true of regions that are commonplace, how much more will it not hold good of a locality where have been enacted some of the most famous occurrences of our history! A recent announcement that a great part of Whitehall is to be demolished to make room for a new set of Government offices may have been received by the public with satisfaction, for it is high time that something be done to remedy a state of affairs that has been a reproach to us so long; and opinion is unanimous that the present disarrangement of the West-end offices is disgraceful to the nation. In this particular we are utterly behind every country in Europe. The wonder is that the vast affairs of the empire have been carried on so long with public offices so scattered. The War Office occupies ten different houses in Pall Mall, with sub-departments in St. James's Square, Great George Street, and New Street. The Admiralty clerks inhabit no less than twenty-eight houses in New Street and in Spring Gardens Terrace, besides the huge main building!

Now that the expenditure which has been going on for so long upon the New Law Courts and the Natural History Museum is diminishing, it is felt that the important step of erecting a building large enough to house the two great spending departments under one roof may be taken. But before this is done, the existing buildings in Whitehall hitherto occupied by the Paymaster-General and the Admiralty Board, together with nearly the whole of Spring Gardens, must be demolished. And with them will vanish a good deal that, if not architecturally, at least historically, is most interesting. At this time, therefore, a brief review of some of the events that have taken place at or near Whitehall may not be unwelcome; and the pleasure (if any) of perusing it will certainly not be lessened if the slight record be extended somewhat beyond the history of those houses which are so soon to be destroyed.

It may safely be said that no part of London is richer in interest of

every kind than that which lies on either side of the spacious highway leading from Trafalgar Square to Parliament Street. The greater part of the thoroughfare is named after that famous palace of Whitehall which was, through many reigns, the scene of countless events, some of which have left an indelible mark on our history. And although what we now see—the Banqueting Hall of Inigo Jones—stately and beautiful though it be, might appear hardly important enough to give its name to what is really more a district than a street, yet it should be remembered that the precincts of the ancient palace were so vast as to be even more than co-extensive with the street we now call Whitehall.

The original residence was built by Hubert de Burgh, Earl of Kent, about the year 1240. It was given by him a few years later to the Black Friars, who, in their turn—perhaps of their own free will, perhaps from pressure put upon them—made it over to the Archbishop of York. His successors regularly inhabited it when they made their journeys to London, and it was known in consequence as York House. It would be more than tedious to give even a sketch of its history through the reigns of monarchs from Henry III. to Henry VIII. ; but we turn towards it instinctively and with wakening interest when we find Wolsey seated there in more than kingly state. The site on which York House stood seems to have been intended by Nature for a royal residence. The ground was smooth and unbroken, so as to lend itself easily to the art of the architect and of the gardener, and sloped gradually down to a noble river. The soil, when once the land had been reclaimed and drained, was doubtless of extraordinary fertility, for it was alluvial. The house was accessible either by road or river—in short a residence, when once built there, would be the most enviable of all the waterside palaces ; and it may be said that, from 1530 onwards to its destruction by fire in 1697, not one of the mansions of the great nobles could compare with Whitehall—as by the end of Henry's reign it had come to be called. It surpassed in extent, and in the number and variety of the buildings which stood in its precincts, the Duke of Somerset's (which was of rather later date), the Duke of Norfolk's, that of the Cecils, and that of the Earl of Exeter. The Savoy Palace was nothing to it. It exceeded even the magnitude and importance of that mansion which was afterwards, though built originally by an Earl of Northampton, called Northumberland House. It was remote from the noise of the Strand, and stood unapproached as yet by any of the narrow and teeming streets that were beginning to rise north and south of that thoroughfare, while close at hand were the deer park that Henry was forming at St. James', and the great Abbey of Westminster.

The most brilliant page of the history of Whitehall begins with Wolsey's name. He kept up a state that would not have disgraced the wealthiest monarch in Christendom. The walls of his chambers were hung with cloth of gold and tissue, cloth of silver, and other rich cloths "wrought about with divers colours." In one chamber hung his suit

of copes, which were of unequalled richness, jewelled and embroidered. In a room called the Gilt Chamber was all his gold plate, much of it being set with pearls and other gems. In the Council Chamber everything was silver and parcel-gilt. He housed and maintained a vast retinue. In every progress, he took with him a train of eight hundred persons, among whom were ten lords, fifteen knights, and forty squires. In a contemporary print of one of these journeys, Wolsey himself is seen riding, not on a prancing palfrey, but—as became a lowly priest—on a mule. That, surely, is a good illustration of “the pride that apes humility.” His cook was dressed in a jerkin of satin, and wore a gold chain round his neck. The entertainments given to Henry were of unparalleled magnificence; but it would be tedious and indeed impossible to give, in a brief article, an adequate idea of any one of them. Suffice it to say that masques and pageants and banquets, mirth and revelry of all kinds, were continually set forth.

When, in 1529, Whitehall was bought by Henry from Wolsey, the king maintained all the cardinal's magnificence. But he did more. Indeed, splendid as the palace had been, it was Henry who made it the noble seat that for a century and a half it continued to be. A most interesting plan, published in 1680, shows Whitehall very much as it was left by Henry a hundred and thirty years before. The river frontage extended from a point in a line with the present Northumberland Avenue, nearly to where Westminster Bridge now stands. The Privy Garden—long since built upon by the houses still called Whitehall Gardens—was laid out in sixteen plots. Further south was the orchard, and beyond this a large smooth-shaven bowling-green. Then among the heterogeneous mass of buildings we find the wine cellar, the great hall, the chapel, the vestry, the pantry, the priory buttery, the cofferer's cellar, the spicery, the kitchen, the small-beer buttery, and many other offices, each set aside for some one department of royal state and luxury. Then comes Scotland Yard, so called from the suite of apartments therein which was used by the Scottish kings when they made their yearly journey to London to do homage and fealty for Scotland before the English monarch. But a large part of the palace precincts extended across what is now the road and abutted on to the Park. Where part of the Horse Guards stands was the tilt-yard, in which magnificent joustings were held, and a little nearer Downing Street was the tennis court; while, as far as may be judged from old engravings, the present house of the First Lord of the Treasury is nearly, if not exactly, on the site of Henry VIII.'s cockpit!

This magnificent king did not, however, content himself with laying out spacious grounds in which he could indulge his taste for sports of all kinds, or with merely extending the number of buildings within the palace confines. He had a sincere and very remarkable taste for art, and it was to him that his successors owed the formation of that collection of pictures that was one of the glories of old Whitehall. He made

most generous offers both to Raffaele and Titian to visit his court, but his overtures were not met. Hans Holbein did, however, enter his service and live in Whitehall, accepting a salary. Old London was indebted to this great artist for the design of one of the finest gateways it possessed. This extended from where Dover House now stands quite across the street. It was of massive and highly-decorated masonry, and faintly resembled in general appearance the gateway we now see at St. James' Palace, being, however, far more richly ornamented. It had an embattled top and embattled towers, and was the chief entrance to the palace from Westminster. It was pulled down in 1759.

But old Whitehall, during Henry's reign, did not look down merely on tournaments and revelries. Here it was that he first met Anne Boleyn, and it was here that he was privately married to her on January 25, 1533. Early in the morning, Dr. Lee, at that time one of the king's chaplains and afterwards Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, was sent for to perform mass in Henry's closet. Besides the king, he found there Anne Boleyn and her train-bearer, Mrs. Savage, who was afterwards Lady Berkeley, and some grooms of the bed-chamber; and Lord Herbert of Cherbury affirms that Cranmer assisted at the ceremony. And it was here that Henry, about whom historians have agreed to differ so widely, old, diseased, and almost deserted, died.

Elizabeth, while not neglecting the art collections of her father, did much towards enlarging the Royal Library. That was sure to be the case with a woman of her learning. She stocked it with Greek, Latin, Italian, and French books of all kinds; and there was one little volume in her own fine handwriting throughout, exquisitely bound in vellum and dedicated to her father. But, while she did thus much for the advancement of studies, her personal vanity made her devote herself to all those extravagant revelries that had distinguished Henry's occupancy of Whitehall. She herself—red-haired, yellow-skinned, and black-toothed—used to sit in the splendid gallery above the tilt-yard as Queen of Beauty; and when she tired of the spectacle of knights and squires baiting each other, there was always ready the diversion of bear, bull, and ape-baiting. But she had seen darker days in the royal abode when, during Mary's reign, she was led from her apartments down the private stairs and conveyed by water to the Tower, on suspicion of being concerned in Sir Thomas Wyatt's conspiracy.

Coming from the seclusion and gloom of the Scottish Court, James plunged headlong into the festivities of Whitehall. But his pastimes differed from the chivalrous entertainments of his predecessors. Joustings ceased, and in their place reigned the burlesque antics and coarse fooleries of such men as Sir Edward Zouch, Sir George Goring, and Sir John Finett, officers of the Court. "But Sir J. Millisent," says a writer of the time, "was indeed the best extemporary fool of them all." The higher taste of James's Queen—Anne of Denmark, who, it may be said, was not the only Danish princess of refinement whom England has seen—

was offended by these exhibitions, and it was to her that the Court was indebted for the introduction of Ben Jonson's masques. This improvement gave Inigo Jones a chance of showing the versatility of his genius, for he was called upon to produce designs for the whole of the decorative and scenic parts of the pageants. Where now is the stage that can lay claim to the services of men like Ben Jonson for its poetry, and Inigo Jones for its decorations? "Such were the magnificent entertainments," says Gifford in his introduction to Massinger's works, "which, though modern refinement may affect to despise them, modern splendour never reached even in thought." It was in this reign that Guy Fawkes was carried to Whitehall and interrogated in the bed-chamber of the king. And at Whitehall Bacon held court, during James's absence in Scotland in 1617, with the same state as that observed by his master, receiving the Council in the Banqueting Hall, and giving thereby much offence.

On January 12, 1619, a banqueting hall which Elizabeth had built was burnt, as well as buildings contiguous to it; and this occurrence may have determined James to rebuild the whole palace, which was by this time becoming somewhat dilapidated. Inigo Jones was at hand, and James must have the credit of discovering those extraordinary talents for the employment of which the arrangement of masques and pageants had hitherto hardly given scope. Jones was appointed Surveyor-General, and commissioned to draw designs for a new palace. He rose to the occasion. With a site before him almost unequalled, he set to work and produced an elevation which, if completed, would have given England what Mr. Knight in his *London* calls the "grandest production of modern architecture." The extent of the space at his disposal would have scared a man of mediocrity; it only stimulated his genius. His plans measured 1,152 feet north and south—that is, along the river bank and the street now called Whitehall—and 874 feet east and west. These gigantic boundaries were to enclose a space which he would have filled with lesser buildings of many kinds and for various purposes; and of these not one would have disgraced the nobleness and dignity of the outer blocks, or failed to form a worthy part of a magnificent whole. But the grand design was never advanced by one brick beyond the Banqueting Hall we now see, for James's extravagance, of which one instance may be given, was boundless. At the wedding of his daughter Elizabeth with Frederick V., Count Palatine of the Rhine, and afterwards King of Bohemia, the cost of the ceremonies of betrothal and marriage was, according to Jesse, 93,278*l*. It seems almost incredible, especially when we take into account the larger buying power of money 260 years ago. But, be this statement accurate or not, it is obvious that the Court festivities, of which this reign was full, were quite enough to impoverish the king's exchequer, and prevent the fulfilment of Jones's noble work. In contrast to these enormous outlays, it is interesting to note that, during the two years the Banqueting Hall was being built, Inigo Jones's pay was

eight shillings and fourpence a day—the equivalent, perhaps, of two pounds of our money. What distinguished architect, Royal Academician or not, would nowadays give his thought and labour for hire such as that ?

It is useless to continue the tale of splendid festivities which distinguished Whitehall through the reigns of the Charleses, no less than during those of their predecessors. Nothing was abated, but everything rather increased. Oblivion of duty and carelessness of the happiness of the nation distinguished both father and son. Nor need the well-known incidents of the one execution that took place before the palace be alluded to. Much controversy has, however, been indulged in by historians of London as to the spot in the Banqueting Hall whence Charles stepped on to the scaffold. Some say that he passed through a window, others that the brickwork was disturbed for the purpose. Herbert, the king's faithful attendant, who was with his master to the end, tells us "the king was led all along the galleries and Banqueting House, and there was a passage broken through the wall by which he passed unto the scaffold." Mr. Jesse says : "It is perhaps sufficient to observe that at the renovation of the Banqueting House a few years since, a fact was made apparent which, I imagine, will be considered as setting the question at rest. Having curiosity enough to visit the interior of the building, the walls of which were then laid bare, a space was pointed out to me between the upper and lower centre windows of about seven feet in height and four in breadth, the bricks of which presented a broken and jagged appearance, and the brickwork introduced was evidently of a different date from that of the rest of the building. There can be little doubt that it was through this passage that Charles walked to the fatal stage." A curious history is attached to the weathercock we now see. It was erected by James II. directly he heard that William had embarked from Holland, in order that he might see whether the wind blew from the east or west, for, from the quarter of the wind, he would judge William's chances of reaching England, whether they were good or bad. A strange feature of the weathercock was that it bore a cross, the peculiar symbol of James's religion. The cross is no longer there.

In April 1691, a large part of the palace was destroyed by a fire which broke out in the Duchess of Portsmouth's apartments; and in 1697 the whole palace, except the Banqueting House and a few buildings adjoining, was laid in ashes by another and greater fire. Evelyn thus briefly states the catastrophe : "Whitehall burnt : nothing but walls and ruins left." And so farewell is said to Whitehall; but it should be a lingering farewell, for, setting aside for a moment its many memories, it must have been a strangely beautiful residence. In turning over old engravings, one is struck by its spaciousness no less than by its well-planned convenience. And these old prints suggest, too, the clear air and cloudless skies that once upon a time used to be common blessings in London, and under whose benign influences the buildings of the palace

must have worn a soft and enchanting appearance. Once more to quote Mr. Jesse : " The days have gone by when the oar of the London waterman was entangled in the stem of the water-lily, or when the river abounded in swans swimming in flocks ; or when, as mentioned in the *Spectator*, ten sail of ' apricoek boats ' were seen landing their cargoes at Strand bridge, having previously taken in melons at Nine Elms."

And one may ask regretfully, what is left of the galleries, the courts, the tapestried rooms, the painted chambers? Where are the orchard, the tennis-court, the gardens with their fragrant alleys bathed in moonlight and thronged with cavaliers? Have music and the dance ceased for ever, and in the pauses of the revelry do lovely women no longer pace with their lovers the flower-strewn banks of the river? Where now is the graceful flight of steps at the foot of which swung silk-hung barges on the bosom of what was then indeed the silver Thames? And the Council Chamber, and those who there moulded the destinies of England—where are they? Wolsey with his slow heart and quick brain? Henry with his powerful mind? his yet more gifted daughter Elizabeth? " large-browed Verulam," whose majestic intellect grappled easily with systems of philosophy that lesser minds can hardly even begin to conceive? Doubtless, too, Shakspeare himself often came here; and Ben Jonson with his exquisite fancies; and Henry Purcell with his sweet strains of music. What is the epitaph over all of them?—

Dust are our frames; and, gilded dust, our pride
Looks only for a moment whole and sound.

II.

It is a matter of some difficulty to decide when the invasion of the ancient court by Government offices began. It was, indeed, a gradual process. The old departments were very much scattered, the Stationery Office, for example, being at the water's edge by Privy Garden, while the Wardrobe Office was at Blackfriars; and there, probably, and at the Savoy were other public offices, near to, but out of the precincts of, the City. We in this country move slowly, and although concentration of offices has been going on for 180 years, yet it is still an unfulfilled dream. No doubt as the affairs of the empire extended, and as public departments grew in size and importance, the inconvenience of having clerks and officials scattered promiscuously over the town was felt more and more. Especially would it be an irksome matter if the Treasury, which has always been the governing power in administrative matters, were at a distance from its dependencies, many of which need to be in daily communication with " my Lords."

When, therefore, the great fire of 1697 cleared large spaces of ground, it was felt that a beginning might be made; for although the west side of the street had not been touched by the flames, yet so utter was the

destruction of the greater part of the palace that the Court could no longer live at Whitehall. Houses fell vacant as the King's dependents moved to Kensington, and by 1708 we find mention made of the Treasury being "kept at the Cockpit near Whitehall;" and indeed "the Cockpit" was the name for the Treasury till (according to Dodsley) as late as 1760. It was here—at the lower end of Downing Street—that Harley and Godolphin had their offices; here Guiscard, the would-be assassin of Harley, fell pierced with wounds; here the renowned Atterbury underwent examination at the hands of the Privy Council before being committed to the Tower.

Several houses were demolished in 1733 in order to erect the present range of Treasury buildings in the Park. The office of Harley and Godolphin, mentioned above, seems to have been of a temporary nature; for George I. gave the house to Baron Bothmar, a Hanoverian Minister, for life. After that term, George II. offered it to Sir Robert Walpole, who declined it as a personal gift, but accepted it as the mansion of future First Lords. That step gave a permanent character to the Treasury quarters and fixed their locality. The large block of buildings, whose pinnacled front faces Montague House, was erected, probably by Ripley, in the reign of George I.; but the present façade is the work of Sir Charles Barry, and replaces a heavy front which was designed by Sir John Soane.

The Horse Guards, built by Vardy after a design furnished by Kent, stands on the site of a former guard-house which was erected in 1641 to keep in check the many noisy agitators who used to gather into crowds as they went to Westminster to pour their grievances into the ready ear of a sympathetic parliament. Arms and the noise of arms had long been familiar, however, to this spot, for it was here, as previously recorded, that Henry's Tilt-Yard was. The new buildings were set up about 1723, and although probably few Londoners could be found to admire them, they are a vast improvement upon what existed before. One curious survival of old times is still to be seen in the paper of instructions fixed in the sentry-boxes in this part of London: the rules are headed *Tilt-yard*.

Old prints of about this date—earlier or later—are very interesting as showing the progress that had been made since the fire. They represent the Banqueting Hall as the centre of a long and very miscellaneous range of low buildings standing behind a high and solid wall. Lord Carington's house—which now is next to the Hall on the north side—was not in existence, but Gwydyr House appears. The Paymaster-General's Office (of which mention will be made directly) is there, very much as it is now seen, except that four tall lamp-posts of massive stone stand in front of the house. The sentries are seen in their sheds at the Horse Guards as we see them now, but the sheds are less than at the present time. From where Dover House now stands, Holbein's beautiful gate stretches nearly across the street—there is an opening between it

and the Banqueting Hall. Forty years later the scene had very much changed. The gateway had been demolished, for the same reason, no doubt, that Temple Bar was taken down. By 1790, Lord Carington's house had sprung up. The high wall just mentioned was no longer there, but where it had stood houses of all sorts and sizes took its place. Hackney-coaches had appeared, and other signs of civilisation, such as an old woman with an apple-stall before her, and two others with a cats'-meat barrow and attended closely by wailing grimalkins.

The Paymaster-General's Office, the most southerly of those which, according to the new plan, are doomed to destruction, is probably one of the oldest houses in this part of London. A leading journal, in an article on the proposed improvements, spoke of it as "an interesting old rabbit-warren;" and that is very much its character if we allow the propriety of the word "interesting." Passages, staircases, corridors, recesses, partitions have gradually but surely, as from time to time they have been opened out or closed up, raised or demolished, altered the whole internal aspect of the house. The building was, for very many years, the official residence of the Paymaster of the Forces, and even now there are one or two rooms that would not misbecome the dignity of a high officer of state. In the plan which was made of Whitehall in the reign of Charles II. (1680), a large house stands on this site—whether the identical building we now see it is impossible to say. It is marked on the plan as the habitation of a Mrs. Kirke: was this the wife of General Kirke, whose "lambs" attained such notoriety after the battle of Sedgemoor? There is a tradition whispered among the clerks that from one of the front windows Cromwell witnessed the execution of Charles, and that if any of the occupants of the room in question, either from stress of work (which, perhaps, is not a frequent provocative), or from mere petulance, lets fall an oath, the Puritan spirit of the great Protector materialises itself in the chimney and knocks ominously.

The loss of that old house, however, will not inspire so much regret as the destruction of the Admiralty. It is not that this building is ancient or handsome, but it awakens many associations. It stands on the site of Wallingford House, of which a word must be said. That mansion was built in the reign of James I., and took its name from its owner, Lord Wallingford, afterwards created Earl of Banbury. From him it passed to George Villiers, Duke of Buckingham, and here his son, the second Duke, was born in 1627. When the father, whose faults and failures had excited popular indignation against him, and the terrible troubles into which the State had been plunged through his influence with James and Charles had heated that indignation into hatred, was stabbed at Portsmouth by Felton, his murdered body was brought to Wallingford House, whence it was conveyed stealthily, for fear of the people, to the Abbey. From the roof of Wallingford House, Usher, Archbishop of Armagh, who was then living here as the guest of the Countess of Peterborough, was prevailed on to take the last

look of his beloved master Charles at the execution of that king. "He sunk in horror at the sight and was carried in a swoon to his apartment" (Pennant). It afterwards became the residence of General Fleetwood, and here the cabal of Wallingford House—as the council of general officers was called—voted the wisdom and necessity of entrusting the full military power of the kingdom to a single individual. But with the Restoration Wallingford House came back to its original possessors, the Villiers family; and in 1667, the body of Cowley the poet, who had done such long and honest and hearty service, both in London and Paris, to the Royal cause, rested on its way from that house in Chertsey where, in Pope's words, "the last accents fell from Cowley's tongue," to the Abbey. And from Wallingford House came that remarkable array of peers and statesmen, courtiers and poets, who followed Cowley to his grave. The only memorial of this part of our history that remains is in the name of the passage which leads from Whitehall into Spring Gardens and is called Buckingham Court. It is sincerely to be hoped that the exigencies of the new block of buildings to be erected here will not utterly obliterate this last little memorial of men who, although bad enough in all sincerity, have yet written their names upon our national records.

The business of the navy was transacted originally in Duke Street, Westminster. By William's reign, however, it had outgrown its quarters, and a lease of Wallingford House was taken by the Government, and the Admiralty staff established there. As the affairs of the nation grew the office grew, and by 1720 the old house of the Dukes of Buckingham was pulled down. Thomas Ripley was the builder of the present ungainly block, and he seems to have excited the derision of Pope, who mentions him in the *Dunciad* :—

See under Ripley rise a new Whitehall,
While Jones' and Boyle's united labours fall.

A heavy and solid stone wall stood where the present screen now is, but after a time popular taste began to cry out against the blank offence of such ugliness. The brothers Adam were commissioned to improve matters, and the stone screen we see to-day, with its sea-horses at the top, is their work. It was built about 1760 and has its admirers. One excellent point is this—that it cuts in two the outrageously disproportioned portico of the main building which so many generations have condemned. The Adams were the architects of many well-known buildings in London, and are best known, perhaps, by the really fine range called Adelphi Terrace—so named to commemorate the work of "the brethren." John Adam also built a good deal of Portland Place and the heavy streets round about, of which Lord Beaconsfield speaks so despairingly in one of his novels. The internal aspect of many of those houses, however, with their carved ceilings, rich cornices, wide staircases, handsome doors, and massive chimneypieces, is far more inviting than the external.

The house on the south side of the archway leading to Scotland Yard was built by Robert Adam in 1771, and has considerable pretensions to taste. In 1724, while the Admiralty was being built, the war-ship "Mermaid" brought from Jamaica six hundred planks of the still comparatively little known wood mahogany for the inner doors and tables of the house. Surely those old doors are in existence still, and will no doubt be used among the fittings of the new building. They will not be the least attractive decorations of the rooms.

The quiet corner known as Spring Gardens is, in common with so much of Whitehall, approaching the term of its natural life. One must regret that its days are numbered, for it, too, is a part of old London. Its seclusion and repose are charming, and any one coming upon it suddenly is surprised to find that no great mansion occupies so desirable a spot. But the Crown, which is the owner of nearly the whole of this recess, seems to have preferred building single houses to parting with the site to any one person. The locality gets its name from the excellent springs of water that were in existence here when the gardens formed part of the Court domain, and Jesse says that, thirty years ago, each house in Spring Gardens Terrace had a separate well of its own. Charles I. seems to have been very fond of these gardens, and made butts, a bathing-pond, and a pheasant yard there. He also licensed a Bowling Green; but in a few years this became too popular a resort. A house was built where an ordinary of six shillings was served—this being a far higher price than that charged for any similar entertainment in other parts of the town. There was drinking under every tree, and, as a natural consequence, several quarrels took place every week. "It was grown scandalous and insufferable; besides, my Lord Digby, being apprehended for striking in the king's garden, he said he took it for a common bowling-place." (Letter from Mr. Garrard to the Earl of Stafford, 1634.) This incident was the finishing touch, and the gardens were closed; but in a year, at the intercession of the Queen, they were again opened. During Cromwell's Protectorate they were once more closed, to be opened, as a matter of course, with renewed extravagance and increased incentives to vice at the Restoration. A good deal of blood has been shed at, or on account of, these gardens. One famous quarrel may be taken as typical of the rest. Henry Jermyn, nephew of Lord St. Albans, and Thomas Howard, brother of the Earl of Carlisle, were rivals for the distinguished favours of Lady Shrewsbury. She was a beautiful but profligate woman, whose husband was afterwards killed in a duel with the second Duke of Buckingham, she herself, it is said, standing by in the dress of a page and holding the horse of her lover. Howard gave a magnificent entertainment to the Countess at a neighbouring house—probably that before mentioned as having been licensed for ordinaries. The Countess, seeing Jermyn in the garden below fuming with wrath at his rival's advantage, and wishing doubtless to be witness of a "scene," beckoned him to the room. He had no sooner

got there than, taking a seat by her side, he began, with audacious and ill-bred insolence, to "gibe and flout and sneer" at the entertainment. There was, of course, only one way open to Howard. He at once gave a challenge, which was of necessity accepted. Seconds were named, and next morning, Jermyn and his "friend" were killed. By whom the "friend" was murdered is not said. To turn to more peaceful topics, it may be mentioned that Milton's lodging at Charing Cross overlooked Spring Gardens, and that Prince Rupert died in this quarter in 1684.

The Government, then, will soon have at their disposal an unequalled site, one which seems to have been meant by Nature for a great and noble building. Man, too, appears unconsciously to have been doing his utmost, through many generations, to make this spot the most central and conspicuous in this mighty city. It is the converging point of north and south, east and west; and it is rich, beyond almost all other localities, in interest. These facts increase the responsibility of the Government, and make it necessary that the greatest care be taken that a design, fitting in every way to the associations of the place and the uses of the proposed building, be accepted—and no other. Our rulers ought at least to have been taught something by past failures. It does not seem absolutely necessary, for example, that in the new offices, drains should so be laid that, as the settlement of the building takes place, they should, one by one, burst. One has heard of that mishap occurring elsewhere. Nor need windows be made that are a perpetual source of discomfort and annoyance to the unfortunate denizens of the rooms. And the latest system of ventilation, highly scientific though it be, would seem capable of improvement if the gratings through which air comes introduce draughts so cold that the feet that may be near them are frozen; and if the ventilation-tubes and air-shafts feed the room with smut-laden and not pure air. These are some of the results that seem not unnaturally to arise when the whole arrangements are placed unconditionally in the hands of a fanciful architect, whose reputation rests, and will rest, on the outside of the building. What is such a man's care for the interior, which (with the exception of a principal marble staircase, or here and there a state-room) the public will never see, in comparison with his regard for the exterior, which all the world will look at?

It seems not impossible, however, in this instance, to dispense with the aid of Royal Academicians altogether; and, in foregoing the pleasure of their assistance, the country would save the enormous fees which they are in the habit of asking and getting. A writer in the *Times* threw out a hint that might doubtless be adopted. He said that the designs of Inigo Jones for the old Palace of Whitehall might, with certain necessary modifications, be followed; and this seems perfectly practicable. If the Office of Works will take the matter up boldly, they may, single-handed, carry it through to a successful issue. They have always been accustomed to provide for the convenience and

requirements of Offices, and the Bow Street Police Court and the New Post Office prove beyond a doubt, by the excellence of their internal arrangements, that the Office of Works is, when put upon its mettle, a competent body. They have sometimes adopted a "penny wise and pound foolish" economy, certainly; but the result should have taught them, by this time, to avoid that in future. As for the outward design, the elevation of Inigo's great Palace of Whitehall is in existence—if not the original drawings, at least trustworthy copies of them. It has even been rumoured, with what accuracy the writer of these pages cannot say, that Jones's model in wood (either his own or an exact copy) on a large scale, and in a perfect state of completeness, is preserved at one or other of our local museums. There must be men in the Office of Works fully able to adapt these designs to the requirements of the new offices. Let the plans be consulted, and even reproduced. So light, so graceful, yet so full of dignity are they, so large in idea and just in conception, that they may well strike a would-be emulator with despair. There is no law of copyright in the matter; let them therefore be followed with absolute exactness as far as the different purpose of the new building will allow.

And what should be the material used? Not the soft and porous stone of which the Houses of Parliament are built—stone that may almost be said to be melting away under the destructive influence of our atmosphere—but that which was used for the Banqueting Hall, which seems to defy even the corrosions of London smoke and all the vicissitudes of the English climate. By the adoption of these means we shall get, at last, a building (to quote the *Times* again) "historically appropriate, architecturally worthy of that unrivalled site, and suited, in the words of the Select Committee [of the House of Commons appointed to inquire into the subject of the new Government Offices], 'to the efficiency and comfort of the public departments and the dignity of the country.'"

No New Thing.

CHAPTER VIII.

COOMASSIE VILLA.



OLONEL KENYON was not called upon to reduce his balance; nor, so far as he could judge, had his surmise regarding Marescalchi been a correct one. The heaviness which had oppressed that lively youth endured but for a night, and his troubles—if indeed he had any—exercised no visible influence upon his spirits in the morning. He appeared to great advantage at breakfast, was loquacious and amusing, without being malicious, and exerted himself very creditably to help out Mrs. Stanniforth in the thankless task of enter-

taining a set of guests who showed no capacity for entertaining themselves. In answer to certain interrogatories, Hugh was able honestly to assure Margaret that he thought her adopted son a great social success.

“There is not one young man in a hundred,” Colonel Kenyon declared, “who could make the best of an awkward position as he does.”

“How an awkward position?” Margaret asked.

“Well, it is awkward, you know; it can’t be otherwise. He is obliged, in a way, to do the duties of master of the house, and yet he is not the master of the house. If he were really your son, for instance, he would take old Lady What’s-her-name in to dinner; he would sit opposite to you, in the place which Mrs. Winnington——”

“I bought an oval table on purpose to avoid that difficulty,” interrupted Margaret.

Hugh smiled. “You saw that it existed, then. I say he comes out of it uncommonly well. He doesn’t assert himself too much, and he doesn’t keep ostentatiously in the background. He looks the situation in the face, in short, and accepts it for what it is, as a sensible fellow



"IS THIS YOUR FIRST BALL, MISS BRUNE?"

NEW YORK

SWAIN

and a gentleman should. At least, so it seems to me." Considering that Colonel Kenyon was speaking of one whom he disliked, this was very handsome; but Margaret scarcely noticed the encomium.

"Do you think he feels it?" she asked eagerly; "do you think it distresses him?"

"I can't tell. You ought to be a better judge of that than I. I know I should feel it, if I were in his shoes; and from one point of view I think it would be a pity if he didn't. He seems to lead a jolly life and enjoy it—small blame to him! But he will be a happier man when he has a profession of his own to work at, and rooms of his own to live in. I should impress that upon him, were I you."

Margaret sighed, and answered rather irrelevantly, "I wish all these people would go away; it is so much pleasanter when we are alone."

In a few days' time she had her wish. The Flintshires were the first to go; and the remainder of the party with great promptitude and unanimity followed their leader. Longbourne, if the truth must be told, was not quite the pleasantest house in England to stay at, nor was Margaret very successful as a hostess. To people who were poor, or sick, or in trouble, she was the kindest, the most unselfish, and the most unwearied of friends; but she had not the gift of small-talk, she could not always remember what to say and what to leave unsaid, and she was unable to feign an interest where she felt none. And of these deficiencies she was fully conscious.

"If it were not for Philip," she said, as the last carriage drove away from the door, "I should never succeed in inducing any one to come down here, and my mother and Edith would live in a howling wilderness."

"Really, Margaret dear, that is a poor compliment to us," cried Mrs. Winnington, who unfortunately overheard this remark. "I hope *some* of our friends find our society a sufficient attraction."

"You've put your foot in it again as usual, Meg," whispered Philip. "When is the next batch due?"

"Oh, not for a long time, I hope," she answered in the same subdued voice. "Even Tom Stanniforth writes to say that he is obliged to postpone his visit for a fortnight; and I don't know of any one else who is expected."

"Then," exclaimed Philip aloud, "let's be happy for a fortnight!"

And for a fortnight, or the best part of it, most of them were happy. In the absence of outsiders, the denizens of Longbourne and Broom Leas were habitually together morning, noon, and night. The younger people had been brought up as brothers and sisters; and although, for obvious reasons, it had been found impossible to maintain this fiction of relationship beyond a certain epoch in their lives, the outward forms and privileges pertaining thereto had not been suffered to fall altogether into disuse. If Philip happened to find himself at Broom Leas towards one o'clock, he took his place at the luncheon-table as a matter of course,

and without anything being said upon the subject ; and neither Walter nor Nellie thought it necessary to wait for an invitation before arranging to dine at Longbourne. To Hugh Kenyon the easy intimacy of this quiet life was like the realisation of a dream ; and for ten days at least it seemed to him that he had reached the green oasis which had been ever before his eyes throughout those toilsome years spent upon the Indian plains. English oaks made a grateful shade for him ; soft English clouds floated low overhead, tempering the heat of the summer sun ; English birds twittered for him on dewy mornings ; and although the blithe tinkling of the mower's scythe, like the thumping of the flails on the threshing-floor, had passed away during his time of exile, never to be heard any more, there was still an abundance of pleasant rural sights and sounds to refresh the heart of a returned wanderer. If Kenyon was not happy, he ought to have been so. He and Margaret had many a long talk together, while the young folks played lawn-tennis or made excursions on horseback ; old friends came up from Crayminster to chat over old times ; the weather was glorious ; and, best of all, Mrs. Winnington was laid up with the gout.

The poor lady had become subject of late years to periodical visits from that enemy of the human race, and suffered during their continuance as much as her best friends could have wished her to do. Stern Mrs. Prosser, who was cut out by nature for a Methodist, but whom the tendencies of the age had converted into an ardent disciple of Mr. Langley, attributed the present attack to an unholy indulgence in animal food on Fridays ; the sufferer herself made her exertions in the entertainment of her daughter's guests responsible for it ; but, whatever its cause, it is to be feared that no one, except Margaret, offered up prayers for its speedy termination. It came to an end, after having run its course, without any extraneous aid of that kind ; and with it came an end of all harmless gaiety and laughter. With Mrs. Winnington stretched upon the drawing-room sofa in a quilted satin dressing-gown and a shocking bad temper, no one had the heart or the courage to be merry : even Philip was upon his best behaviour, talked little, and refrained from any irritating speeches. He obtained small thanks for his forbearance.

"That young man has either got into some mischief, or he is meditating some," Mrs. Winnington took occasion to whisper impressively to Hugh. "I always know that anything like self-effacement on his part bodes no good for poor Margaret's peace."

And when, in the course of the day, Philip announced casually that he was going away for a week, the old lady threw a triumphant glance at her confidant, as who should say, "Didn't I tell you so ?"

"Why, where are you off to ?" asked Hugh innocently.

"I think," said Philip in deliberate accents, "that we must be going to have a change of weather. The glass has been falling all day."

The questioner felt very much snubbed and very naturally angry.

It is not pleasant to be set down by a man of half your age, and it is still less pleasant to feel that the implied rebuke is merited. Of course one has no business to put direct questions, and Hugh remembered that Margaret had said something to him about letting young men go their own way. Still, distinctions ought to be drawn between intentional and inadvertent solecisms, and Hugh said to himself in his wrath that this impertinent puppy might go to the devil for anything he cared. Nothing more was said upon the subject at the time; but after dinner Mrs. Winnington, undeterred by the fate of her predecessor, chose to repeat the same query in a loud and authoritative voice; and she, at all events, was rewarded by an answer.

"I have received her Majesty's command," said Philip sweetly, "to attend her at Balmoral. I believe there is a probability of my being asked to form a fresh administration."

Upon this, Walter, who was easily moved to laughter, broke out into a tremendous guffaw, which was followed by a deep and awful silence. Margaret began to talk very quickly, and soon afterwards Mrs. Winnington, who had closed her eyes, not deigning to make any rejoinder, was assisted off to bed by her maid.

Later in the evening, when the three men of the party were sitting in the smoking-room, Philip condescended to give a sort of reason for his departure, unasked. "Mrs. Winnington and I are like buckets in a well," he said; "when one comes into sight away goes the other. Perhaps the dear old creature may have started off on a round of visits before I come back. The fact is that I promised to go and stay with some people about this time."

"Then why the dickens couldn't you say so?" blurted out Walter. "What's the use of making mysteries?"

Philip shrugged his shoulders. "My dear fellow, I don't make mysteries; but it isn't always convenient to tell everybody where one has been and where one is going. If you answer in one case you must answer in all. Suppose I were to ask you what you and Edith were doing, when you marched off to the farm-yard this afternoon, and left us without a word of explanation? I don't want to know; but suppose I had the indiscretion to ask?"

"Well, I should tell you the truth. We were seeing the pigs fed. Now then!"

"Ah, I give in. I admit the superiority of your method, and in future I shall always try to be equally candid. So you went to see the pigs fed, did you? And to-morrow I am going to see the Smiths, or the Browns, or the Robinsons. Strictly true; and at the same time conveniently vague." On the following morning, accordingly, Philip quitted Longbourne for some destination unknown, leaving behind him one trustful heart and several suspicious ones. Margaret made a rather lame apology to Hugh on his behalf.

"Philip is a little reticent sometimes; circumstances have made him

so. He does not always tell even me what his plans are and how he spends his time; and I think it is so much better not to force any one's confidence. I know he will always come to me when he is in trouble."

"I dare say he will," answered Hugh drily. And immediately afterwards, fearing that he had said a terribly severe thing, he added, "No one likes to be cross-examined. I don't like it myself. I remember how strict my poor old father used to be, and of course I concealed things from him. As for Philip, he will grow out of the habit of thinking his proceedings of such supreme importance to the world. Probably he is no worse employed now than in rehearsing for play-acting at some country house in the next county."

At the moment when this generous conjecture was uttered, the subject of it was hailing a hansom at the Charing Cross station; and if the address which he gave to the cabman had been heard at Longbourne, it might have occasioned some misgivings there. "Coomassie Villa, Wolseley Road, West Brompton"—it certainly had not an aristocratic, nor even a respectable ring, and it would have been difficult to give a satisfactory explanation of Mr. Marescalchi's presence in such quarters in the month of August.

Nobody, however, did hear it, except the cabman, and he didn't know where Wolseley Road was, and had to be guided thither by the umbrella of his fare. Coomassie Villa, when reached, proved to be a small detached house, situated in the very last street in London, and looking as if it had been built about the day before yesterday. To right and left of it were other dwellings of a similar size, but of great diversity of architecture, all surpassingly hideous and most as yet untenanted; the road which led to it was full of ruts and deep holes, and its windows looked upon a waste of cabbage-gardens and smoking brick-fields.

Philip caught up his portmanteau briskly, dismissed the hansom, and let himself in with a latch-key. No servant appeared to relieve him of his load, nor was there a sign of life about the place until he had shut the hall-door behind him with a bang. Then there came a sudden rushing and pattering sound from overhead, and an exceedingly pretty young woman flew down the narrow staircase, dragging her long silken skirts after her, and, throwing her arms round his neck, cried, "Oh, Philip, how late you are! I had almost given you up."

Philip kissed her, held her away from him at arm's length, and inspected her from head to foot, laughing softly to himself. She was a delicate, fragile little creature, with pink and white cheeks, and an abundance of fair hair arranged in little curls all over her head. She was absurdly over-dressed, and was evidently conscious of being so; for she said, in a deprecating, half-frightened voice, "I thought, as you was coming, I might make myself smart, Philip, just for once. I did so long to put on this beautiful gown; but it seemed a shame to be taking the wear out of it when there was no one but Sarah and cook to

see me." She passed her hands over her well-fitting body and stroked her olive-green skirt lovingly. "Exquisite!—ain't it?" cried she, with childish glee.

"It is indeed," Philip answered gravely. "So I am late, am I? You see, I have had to drive from Dan to Beersheba. Upon my word, Fan, I think I shall have to move you out of this into some place within the limits of civilisation. I don't believe there would be any risk about it, and it would be a great deal more convenient."

They were now sitting in a tiny drawing-room, which was furnished with more luxury and in better taste than might have been expected from the outward appearance of the villa.

"Oh, I hope you won't!" cried the little woman. "That is, you do what you think best, dear; what pleases you will please me; but I'd rather be here than in a regular London street. I like the view, you see; it sort of puts me in mind of the country."

Philip looked out at the dreary cabbage-gardens, the black, broken fences, and the brick-fields all simmering in a hot haze. "Poor little Fan!" he said compassionately; "it's a horrid shame to keep you mewed up here all the summer; but it can't be helped. Another year we shall be able to manage better, I hope."

"Oh, I don't mind it!" she answered cheerfully. "I am very 'appy—happy, I mean—here; and now that you've come, dear, I wouldn't change places with the Queen on her throne. There's days when it's a little lonesome; but cook has given me a cat to keep me company, and what with my lessons and the pianner and the 'ouse—*housekeeping*, I get through the days wonderfully. Now don't you fret about me, Philip dear; please don't fret—for my sake."

"Well, if you put it upon that ground—I won't," answered Philip, who sometimes indulged in a little mild sarcasm at his own expense, and found the sensation a rather refreshing and bracing one. "There are undeniable advantages in living in this back-of-beyond sort of place, apart from its charmingly rural situation. Also I haven't paid for the furniture yet; and the upholsterer might get nervous if he found us flitting so soon. You don't stay indoors too much, I hope?"

"Not now. At first I used to be afraid of meeting people; but I've got over that; and now Sarah and me go out every evening. Oh, and who *do* you think I came across in Kensington Gardens last week?—nearly ran into his arms. Why, Salford. It did give me such a start!"

"Salford!" cried Philip, with a rather alarmed face; "I thought he was in Norway. Did he recognise you?"

"Not he; he didn't have the chance. I put down my parasol, so as to hide my face, and he passed almost as close to me as you are, walking with another gentleman. I heard him say something about 'beastly country—half starved—couldn't have stood it another week;' and then he began using awful language, like he always used to, you

know, and when I peeped out he was gone. I'd have given anything to have spoke to him—just for the sake of old times.”

“My dear Fanny, you must never think of doing anything of that kind. Good heavens! it might be the ruin of us.”

“Oh, Philip! of course I wouldn't have done it; I should never disobey you. I didn't really care to talk to him either—not for himself. Don't you know how I always used to tell you I couldn't a-bear him?”

“Bear him, Fan. No; I remember he wasn't a favourite of yours; though I believe he thought you were desperately smitten with him. Did I tell you that all Oxford gave him the credit of eloping with you?”

“Him, indeed!” cried Fanny, with a toss of her head; “well, I'm sure! They're very clever people at Oxford, but they don't know so much as they think. Why, I'd no more have looked at him!—not if he'd offered to make me his Marchioness. And that's what he'd never have done.”

“Not such a fool, eh? Fortunately or unfortunately—which is it, do you think?—some other men are less prudent,” said Philip, looking at her and laughing.

Mrs. Marescalchi, who had been holding up her left hand, the better to admire the wedding-ring which adorned it, flushed and then turned pale. “Ah, my dear,” she sighed, “the day will come when you'll repent of all your goodness to me. Maybe you're repenting of it just a little bit already.”

Maybe he was. He did not like to acknowledge himself inferior in worldly wisdom to Lord Salford, a man whom he utterly despised; and as to the abstract wisdom of marrying a young woman from a pastry-cook's shop there could hardly be two opinions. He was not, and never had been, very deeply in love with poor little Fanny; but he had married because he had fancied himself so, because he hated to deny himself anything that he had set his heart upon, and because, if the truth must be told, she would not have consented to occupy Coomassie Villa upon any other terms. When he thought seriously of the step that he had taken, and of its inevitable consequences, he felt very uncomfortable: therefore he thought of it as seldom as possible.

“You little goose!” he said; “I don't repent of anything.”

She went on, without heeding him: “But when that day does come, you'll remember—won't you?—that it wasn't all my fault. You'll remember what a long time I held out against you, and that I only gave in at last because I loved you so. I'm afraid I shall never get to be like a lady—not a real lady. I do my lessons every day, as you told me; and when I'm alone I think I can *beyave*—well, *behave* then—as nice as any of them; but if you was to introduce me to Mrs. Stanniforth to-morrow I should be that flustered—oh, dear! You won't let any of your people know that we're married for a long time; will you, dear?”

Philip unhesitatingly promised that he would not. He told Fanny that she was a dear little sensible thing, and that there was not one woman in a thousand who would have seen the necessity for concealment, and submitted to it as cheerfully as she had done. At this commendation Fanny brightened up; her pretty face broke out into smiles and dimples, and the tears which had been gathering in her eyes vanished. She did not mind concealment one bit, she declared. People might stare and gossip as much as they liked—and to be sure cook was very impertinent at times—but what did she care? Let them chatter. “You see,” she explained, “it isn’t with me as it might be with other girls. I’ve neither kith nor kin, except Aunt Keziah; and Aunt Keziah knows all about it, and saw us married with her own eyes. Bless you! I’m as happy as the day is long. I don’t want for anything, unless it’s to see you a little oftener, Philip.”

The vehemence of these protestations might have led some persons to suspect that the speaker was not quite as indifferent to the opinion of the world as she professed to be; but Philip did not appear to doubt her sincerity. He patted her on the head, praised her good sense again, and assured her that her patience would have its reward all in good time. Then, having had enough of serious conversation, he sat down at the piano and began singing snatches of songs from the comic operas of the day, improvising an accompaniment for himself as he went on, while his wife listened in adoring admiration.

Philip had a remarkably sweet tenor voice, which he managed not unskilfully. It was one of the many gifts which he possessed, and which he had cultivated for a time and then wearied of; for there was no pertinacity in his nature, and of all things in the world he abhorred drudgery the most. He was fond of music, however, and would sing in a desultory sort of way for an hour at a time, when he had no more amusing occupation at hand. The round, liquid notes filled the little house, and floated out through the open window into the sultry atmosphere beyond, causing the few passers-by to pause and listen, and falling gratefully upon the ears of Fanny’s music-master, who reached the doorstep in time to hear *O Catarina bella* from beginning to end.

“God bless my soul, sir!” cried the good man, bursting into the room with scant ceremony, “what a sad pity it is that you have not your daily bread to earn! There are thousands a year in that voice of yours, Mr. Marescalchi, if you only knew it.”

Philip laughed, and said he believed that his voice was destined to be utilised in other and less attractive quarters than the opera-house; and then, as he possessed an ear as well as a voice, and did not care about hearing poor Fanny worry her way through the “Harmonious Blacksmith,” he took his hat, and strolled out into the hideous wilderness that surrounded his wife’s dwelling.

The hopeless ugliness, the solitude, the heat and the bad smells of that shabby-genteel suburb did not depress his spirits. Philip was one

of those happy people who, while loving all beautiful things, can do very well without them for a time; and, after all, he didn't live at Coomassie Villa. He enjoyed his brief periods of residence there chiefly because they came in some sort under the head of forbidden pleasures. There was something that tickled his fancy, too, in the notion of being a married man and the owner of such a queer establishment; and he contemplated the half-finished houses, the dirty children playing in the middle of the road, and the clothes hanging out to dry in the back-yards with an amused smile, as part and parcel of the humours of the situation. He was in high good humour, lounging hither and thither in the midst of all that unsightliness and squalor; and ever as he walked, the music-master's hasty exclamation kept measure with his steps in a pleasant, monotonous cadence of "Thousands a year!—thousands a year!" "Why not?" Philip cried aloud, at last; and echo returned no answer to this query.

That day was an altogether delightful one for Mrs. Marescalchi. She was informed that, subject to certain prudential restrictions, she might choose for herself in what way she would spend the latter half of it; and, after due consideration, she decided for a row on the river, dinner at the Criterion, and a visit to the Promenade Concert at Covent Garden to finish up with. At that season of the year such a programme did not seem too risky to be sanctioned, and in pursuance of it the young couple found themselves, about an hour before sunset, drifting lazily down stream towards Hammersmith.

"Fan," said Philip suddenly, "I have hit upon an entirely new scheme of life."

"Have you, dear?" responded Fanny, straightening herself up, and ceasing to dabble her fingers in the water; for the tone of her lord and master's voice appeared to call for an attitude of respect and attention.

"I have always thought," Philip said gravely, "that the finger of Fate pointed me rather towards spangles and tights than towards the woolsack. I am sure you will agree with me in thinking that I might easily become Lord Chancellor, if I were not above being at the trouble of earning that distinction."

Fanny signified that she felt no doubt whatever as to that.

"The Lord Chancellor gets 10,000*l.* a year, which is very pretty pay, as times go; but then one has to pass through a deuce of a lot of bother and worry, and to grow an ugly old man, before one has a chance of drawing the salary. All things considered, I am not sure that it would not be preferable to put up with a smaller income—say a couple of thousand a year, or so—and begin to earn it, while one is in the prime of one's youth and beauty, as a *primo tenore* at the Opera."

Fanny clapped her hands in delight. "Oh, Philip, do you really mean it? How glorious! But I didn't know gentlemen ever went upon the stage."

"In these enlightened days, my dear Fanny, a gentleman is allowed to exercise any trade that brings in a sufficient amount of money. I think I'll go and look up old Steinberger to-morrow, and hear what he says. Supposing that he reports favourably—which he very likely won't do, mind you—I shall be much inclined to brave the home authorities, and go in for an independent career. There's a charm about independence—at least, I imagine that there is; for I have no personal experience to guide me in speaking upon the point. In the sense of freedom from supervision, it might be attainable pretty early in the business: freedom from pecuniary obligations would have to be postponed until a little later. Oh, my dear Fan, what an unmitigated rascal you have got for a husband!"

Fanny stared, shook her pretty head in bewilderment, and exclaimed, "Why, whatever do you mean?"

"It would take rather too long to explain. How would you like to go to Italy for a couple of years?"

"Me? Go to Italy? Oh, laws!"

"Fanny, you shock me. You really should try to cure yourself of indulging in low ejaculations. You may say 'Oh, lor!' when you want to intimate delight and surprise; I heard a duchess use the expression the other day, so it must be all right; but you mustn't say 'Oh, laws!'—it's vulgar. Yes; I suppose, if I do go in for this business, it will be a case of Italy to begin with. There is no reason why you shouldn't complete your education there, and we should certainly be able to see much more of one another in a foreign land than we can here."

That clinched the matter, so far as Mrs. Marescalchi was concerned. Visions of palms and orange-groves, of marble palaces and shady retreats, made for happy lovers, began forthwith to present themselves to her excited imagination. She could hardly enjoy the unwonted dissipation of the evening for thinking of it all; and Philip was very good-natured in helping out her crude dreams with sundry pretty fancy sketches of their future life. No one knew better than he did how unlikely it was that fancy would in this instance prove the forerunner of fact; but no one had a clearer conviction than he of the harmlessness of fancy and the wisdom of indulging in it, upon occasion. It did not affect the future one way or the other, and it made the present agreeable. Philip's philosophy was of that practical kind which concerns itself chiefly with the present.

Everybody who is at all in the musical world knows Herr Steinberger; and so, for the matter of that, do a few thousands of people who are not. Years ago he established his reputation by introducing to the Parisian stage a young singer whose fame is now world-wide. Shortly after this lucky hit, he took up his residence in London, where he soon became the singing-master *par excellence* of society, and where he is to be seen most nights during the season, playing raging accompaniments to the drawing-room performances of amateurs of both sexes. He is a

man of much energy, perseverance, and good-will; his successes have been many; and as he charges the highest permissible price for his lessons, and is said to be in the habit of addressing his pupils with the most cruel frankness, his popularity is unbounded, and during nine months at least out of the year he is as hardworked and as well paid for his work as any toiler within the four seas.

Philip, who had a slight acquaintance with Herr Steinberger, from having met him here and there at theatrical and operatic entertainments, went to call upon him on the morning after his arrival in London, and found him in the act of packing up in preparation for a well-earned holiday. Steinberger, like a man of business as he was, wasted no time in preliminaries, and expressed no surprise at his visitor's choice of a profession, but proceeded to put him through his paces. His verdict was not particularly encouraging.

"Hah! very pretty—very goot for a leetle concert in a leetle room; but you know not how to sing at all—oh, not at all, not at all! You must forget all what you have learnt; that is the first thing. How old are you?"

"Twenty-four," said Philip.

"So! There is no great hurry, then. Come to me again in the autumn, if you do not change your mind meanwhile. You have a voice; but whether it is worth anything—that is more than I, or any one else, can tell you yet. Work, work, work; and in two years', three years' time—perhaps—we shall see."

And before Philip could press the oracle for any more definite response he was gently pushed out of the room.

Fanny, who had been pacing up and down the street outside during this interview, was a little disappointed when she heard the upshot of it.

"I expect he's a silly sort of old man, after all," she said.

But Philip reassured her. "Steinberger's always like that: it's his way. He doesn't choose to let his praise be easily earned; and quite right too: nobody cares for a cheap article. If he hadn't thought pretty well of my chances, he wouldn't have told me to come back."

Philip had taken it strongly into his head that he would like to become a second Mario; and that, according to the Italian proverb, was the surest means he could have adopted towards attaining his end. It had, at all events, the effect of making him very cheerful and sanguine for the time; for when he wanted a thing very much, he always made up his mind that he was sure to get it, hating disappointment, and being unable to bring himself to the contemplation of so disagreeable an eventuality.

Propheying smooth things, and enjoying the glories of success in advance, he strolled along the shady side of Piccadilly, while the happy Fanny hung upon his words;—which thing he would hardly have dared to do, even at that advanced season of the year, had he had all his wits

about him. And before very long his neglect of ordinary precautions was brought home to him in a way which he did not like; for as the couple turned into the Green Park, who should come striding out, and almost run up against them, but Colonel Kenyon?

The encounter was over, and Colonel Kenyon round the corner and out of sight in an instant; and Philip, who would have given a great deal to know whether the recognition had been mutual or not, continued his walk in a state of painful uncertainty. He comforted himself by reflecting that the old fellow was just that sort of duffer who would pull up and shake hands with a friend, no matter under what circumstances he might chance to meet him; but, for all that, he inwardly cursed his own thoughtlessness, and resolved that no one should ever meet him in the streets of London with Fanny again.

Two days afterwards he went down to stay with some friends in Gloucestershire, whence he immediately despatched a letter to Margaret, giving her a very entertaining description of a ball at which he had not been present, and stating that he had been so busy with rehearsals ever since his arrival that he really had not been able to find a minute for writing before.

CHAPTER IX.

MISS BRUNE'S PARTNER.

THE great fire which consumed two-thirds of the Duke of Retford's historic mansion in Yorkshire, reducing to ashes about a quarter of a mile of indifferent pictures, together with much ancient and valuable furniture and many curiosities and heirlooms impossible to replace, was an event deeply deplored by his Grace, still more deeply deplored by the insurance offices, and declared by the newspapers to be nothing less than a public calamity. Still, as is the case with most calamities, public and private, there were not a few people who found their profit in it; and among these were persons of all ranks dwelling round about Crayminster. For, although the work of reconstruction was set on foot with all the speed which a magnate of the Duke of Retford's resources could command, it had barely been in full swing for two years, and was consequently very far indeed from approaching completion, when the young Marquis of Craybridge came of age; and thus it became necessary that the festivities which ought to have gladdened the north of England upon that occasion should be held at Craybridge Hall, a residence little liked and seldom visited by the family. The festivities in question were, it was rumoured, to be celebrated upon a scale unprecedented in the annals of the county. They were to last through the best part of a week; they were to be marked not only by the ordinary features of triumphal arches, oxen roasted whole, bonfires, fireworks, and the like, but by a revival of sundry old English sports, intermingled with such modern ones as

cricket, polo, and lawn-tennis, and they were to include a ball which a prince of the blood royal had promised to grace with his presence.

All this enforced hospitality would have possessed little interest for our friends at Broom Leas—for Craybridge Hall was situated some fifteen miles away from them, and its inmates were not upon their visiting-list—had not the heir apparent, who had been Walter's fag at Eton, happened to meet his old schoolfellow at a cricket-match on the Crayminster ground, and taken that opportunity for renewing acquaintance with him. This chance encounter had led to an introduction of both Walter and his sister to the Duchess, who had been very civil and friendly; and for some days afterwards Nellie had cherished a faint hope of being invited to the great ball. Nothing, however, came of it; and when Walter was asked to take part in the cricket-match, and to dine and sleep at Craybridge afterwards, she ceased to think about the matter, perceiving that her dream of dancing in the same room with royalty was not to be fulfilled upon that occasion. All the greater, therefore, was her delight when, at the eleventh hour, Lord Craybridge rode over to Broom Leas bearing a hastily-written, but kindly, note from his mother, in which Miss Brune was begged, if she would pardon the informality of the invitation, to stay at the Hall, not only for the night of the ball, but for the entire week. Every hole and corner in the house had had its occupant allotted to it weeks before, the young man explained; it was only that morning that one of the invited guests had sent an apology, and had left free the room which it was hoped that Miss Brune would consent to use. His mother would have called herself; only the truth was that she was in such a state of fuss and flurry that she hardly knew whether she was standing on her head or her heels.

"I don't suppose there is such another abominable house in England. Nothing could make it habitable; and we have got to cram at least twenty more people into it than it will hold. The whole business will be acute misery for us. But I dare say it won't be bad fun for the lookers-on, and we'll do the best we can to amuse you, Miss Brune, if you'll come."

Miss Brune required no persuasive speeches. She answered, with the frankness which was her habit, "Thank you; I should like of all things to go; but I am afraid I mustn't give an answer until I have seen my father. Would it do if I wrote by to-night's post?"

Lord Craybridge intimated that a demand for instant decision had not formed part of his instructions; and after apologising once more, and declaring that he should await the arrival of the post-bag the next morning with the greatest anxiety, took his leave.

"Undoubtedly you must go," said Mr. Brune, when his sanction was requested later in the day. "We will forgive the Duchess's want of ceremony, because much must be pardoned to duchesses. Moreover, Nell, it is quite clear to me that you are upon the threshold of a great opportunity. Only play your cards skilfully, and who knows whether

you may not become a duchess yourself one of these days? I am grieved that you should not have had the presence of mind to press Lord Craybridge to stay to luncheon."

"That boy!" cried Nellie, with fine disdain; "why he must be three years younger than Walter, at least. Besides, I would rather die than marry a man above me in rank. Fancy being like Lady Travers, who doesn't dare to ask her own relations into her own house! If I thought any one could suspect me of such pitiful designs, I wouldn't go to Craybridge at all."

"Perhaps nobody will suspect you," Mr. Brune answered gravely; "indeed, there seems to be a very good chance that nobody will. Pray don't refuse this invitation hastily. Consider what you owe to your family; consider what will be the position of your poor father if there is another bad harvest, and the hops turn out a failure again; and if that won't move you, picture to yourself the impotent wrath of Mrs. Winnington when she hears that you have gone to stay a whole week with a duchess."

It must be acknowledged that this last consideration would have had some weight with Nellie, even if her mind had not already been made up; for she had had many things to bear from Mrs. Winnington in the way of patronage and criticism, and hers was not a meek nature. But she had more than a sufficiency of other motives, less open to exception, to influence her decision; and she went to bed that night with a heart so full of joyous anticipation that there was no room in it for malice or uncharitableness.

Nellie Brune was fortunate enough and unsophisticated enough to possess the faculty of enjoyment to its fullest extent. Her life had been so healthy and natural a one, she had dwelt among such simple and honest people, that she had learnt nothing of that wearisome habit of introspection which is the curse of the present generation, and enjoyed the good things of this world without bothering herself to analyse her emotions. Margaret's care, and perhaps also a share of hereditary good breeding, had preserved her from growing up into a hoyden; but at the age of eighteen she much resembled Horace's Lydè—

*Quæ, velut latis equa trima campis
Ludit exsultim.*

High spirits and the customs of a large family may have made her a little indiscreet at times, a little too prompt in forming judgments, and rash in giving utterance to them; but these are faults which time seldom fails to soften down, and it is only sour-tempered people who would quarrel with them, when accompanied by all the physical and mental charms of youth.

Nellie achieved a signal success at Craybridge Hall, where she speedily became a universal favourite. Happily for her comfort, the young heir did not fall in love with her, his budding affections being

engaged elsewhere at that time; but both he and his mother showed her every possible kindness and attention, and she rewarded them, on the last day, by declaring that she had never spent such a happy week before in her life.

"It has all gone off so splendidly, hasn't it?" she said.

The Duchess smiled, and said, "I am very glad you think so."

"Oh! everybody must think so; there hasn't been a single failure. The cricket might have been better certainly; but that was partly the fault of the ground. Now there is only the ball to-night, and then there will be an end of everything. I should like to have it all over again from the beginning."

"I should not," said the Duchess, laughing. "I am glad, for your sake, that there is still the ball to look forward to; but I shall be very thankful, for my own, when I can look back upon it. Out of all the host of people who have been asked, I believe scarcely a dozen have refused. You must not expect to be able to dance."

"Oh! we shall manage," answered Nellie, confidently. "I mean to dance all night. That is, if I get partners enough," she added, as a modest afterthought.

If a sufficient supply of partners was all that was required, Miss Brune ran no risk of having a moment's repose until after sunrise. She made her appearance in the ball-room rather late, and was at once besieged by a multitude of acquaintances, old and new, insomuch that she speedily got out of her reckoning, and had engaged herself two or three times over for every dance upon the programme before she knew where she was. She was, in truth, a little dazzled by the brilliancy of the scene around her. Notwithstanding the Duchess's disparaging criticism of it, the picture-gallery, which had been made to do duty for a ball-room, was spacious enough to answer the required purpose, and with its beautiful old crystal chandeliers, its banks of hothouse plants, and its miniature fountains playing in every recess, was in Nellie's eyes something closely approaching an earthly paradise. Nearly the whole of the expected company was assembled; for the invitations had been issued "to have the honour of meeting their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Middlesex," and punctuality was consequently indispensable. All the diamonds of two counties were sparkling and twinkling upon the persons of their fortunate owners; and never before had Miss Brune been privileged to gaze upon so varied a collection of magnificent toilettes. Taking stock of these, one by one, she presently became aware of Mrs. Winnington and Edith, whom she had not expected to meet, and whose surprise at the encounter was evidently not less than her own.

"Oh! how do you do? I did not know you were to be here," said the former, not very graciously. "Who brought you?"

"I have been staying here for a few days," Nellie answered, with a demure enjoyment of her triumph; and Walter, who was standing by, added explanatorily:—

"The Duchess was good-natured enough to ask Nell over for the week."

"Oh, indeed!" said Mrs. Winnington, looking very black. "Your father did not mention it when I saw him yesterday. Rather odd not to have invited him too, was it not?" She was scrutinising Nellie from head to foot through her eye-glasses, and now asked abruptly, "Is that the dress Margaret gave you?"

"Yes; is it not lovely?"

"It fits atrociously in the back," Mrs. Winnington was beginning; but this well-meant shot missed fire, for the opening words were drowned in the crash of the orchestra striking up "God save the Queen," and all eyes were instantly turned towards the doorway, through which a procession of august personages was seen approaching. The Duke of Middlesex, who had a country house in the neighbourhood, had arrived within five minutes of his time, and was leading his hostess up the room, followed by some German Serenities and a galaxy of minor stars whom he had brought with him.

By the time that Nellie had recovered to some extent from the excitement into which she had been thrown by the passing of this little pageant, the throng had effectually separated her from her amiable old friend, and she had been taken charge of by her first partner, a stranger whose name she had failed to catch. He seemed to be a good deal amused by the girl's unconventional talk and artless admiration of the big-wigs at the other end of the room.

"Is this your first ball, Miss Brune?" he asked, smiling.

"Oh, dear no!" answered Nellie, much offended. "What put that into your head?"

"I beg your pardon, I'm sure. It is so many years since I was young myself that I have almost forgotten what it feels like; but I know there was a time when it used to make me very angry to be taken for less than my age. Nowadays I often have to complain of exactly the opposite error; and I assure you it is a great deal more painful to be set down as an old man than as a very young one."

Nellie looked up at him. He was a tall man, with a bright, good-humoured face, a fair moustache, and closely-cut reddish beard; his eyes were clear, and his hair—what little there was of it—unmixed with grey. Decidedly he was not old; but probably he was not far off middle age. Nellie was upon the point of saying, in a generous spirit, "I should put you at about forty;" but thought better of it. After all, these delicate subjects were best not meddled with, and some people, she knew, became bald early in life.

"I have been to plenty of balls before," she said, reverting to the original topic; "but I never was at one of this kind until now. Nearly all the faces are new to me. I am not accustomed to associating with princes and princesses, either, as I dare say you are."

"They are very much like the rest of the world, when you come to know them."

"They may be. But I cannot possibly come to know them; so they are not at all like the rest of the world to me. I shall be talking about this evening for years to come most likely, and I want to hear who everybody is. Are there many celebrities in the room, and do you know them all?"

"I know a good many of them by sight, at all events. The great majority of them are relations or connections of the house—lords and ladies—celebrities in a certain sense. I don't think there is any one present whom I should call exactly a distinguished person; but then I'm a Radical, and my ideas of distinction are not likely to be the same as yours. That fine-looking old fellow, with the white hair, is Lord Aintree, the great racing man. He is immensely popular on the turf, and he deserves to be so; for there isn't a more honourable or straightforward man in England. The lady whom he is talking to is Lady Carlton, whom you may have heard of. She gives a great many big parties in London, and is supposed to render invaluable services to the Tory party."

"She looks a very forbidding sort of old woman," Nellie remarked.

"Do you think so? Well, perhaps she is a little hard-featured; but she is a good old soul, for all that. I happen to know that she gives away thousands a year in charity; and there are not many people of whom that can be said."

He went on describing the guests, one after another, in this way; and the odd thing was that, although he told some amusing stories and had some queer personal characteristics to point out, he did not make a single ill-natured observation from beginning to end.

"Why, according to you, they are all delightful!" Nellie exclaimed at last; "you haven't a bad word for anybody."

"Why should I use bad words? Most of these people have shown me kindness, at one time or another; and what is the good of picking one's neighbours to pieces? It's a shocking bad habit. One may just as easily look at a man's good points as at his ugly ones; and, if the truth were known, I suspect it would be found that we are all tarred with much the same brush."

"One must have likes and dislikes, though. I hate some people; and so do you, I suppose."

"Upon my word, I don't think I do. I don't even hate my own political chief, though he is always snubbing me, and invariably walks out of the House when I get upon my legs."

"Are you in Parliament, then?" asked Nellie, with an increased respect for her partner; "and do you make speeches?"

"I do indeed," he answered, laughing; "only too many of them. But I am a man of hobbies, I must tell you; I generally have some measure on hand that I want to force through, and unless I make a nuisance of myself there wouldn't be the least chance for me. So I go on pegging away, session after session, and sometimes, after a great deal of fighting and abuse, I carry my point."

He looked so strong, so good-humoured and honest, that Nellie felt irresistibly drawn to him. "It is a great pity that you should be a Radical," she said gravely.

"Oh! but I assure you Radicals are not so black as they are painted, and, as for me, I am a very mild specimen of the race. I don't want to abolish the Queen, or the House of Lords, or even the Church. In fact, at this present moment, I don't want to abolish anything, except vivisection. That is my hobby just now. I want total abolition of vivisection; and I hope I shall get it, too."

"I am sure I hope you will!" cried Nellie warmly; "I am quite on your side there."

"What! are you for total abolition? You won't be satisfied with a commission of inquiry, or with careful supervision of the practice? You don't think that headlong legislation is a thing to be deprecated upon all grounds, and that we may safely rely upon the evidence of men of science whose devotion to the welfare of the human race is notorious?"

"I'm for total abolition," answered Nellie firmly. "The human race must shift for itself; we can't hear the dogs' evidence."

"Ah! then you must be a Radical at heart. A Radical, you know, is an obnoxious person who insists upon going to the root of things, and looks upon all compromises with suspicion. I hope, after this, you won't hate all Radicals."

"You will allow me to hate vivisectionists, though."

"No, I won't. You may hate their practice as much as you like. Take my advice, Miss Brune, and hate things; don't hate people. But I'm keeping your next partner waiting, and he is throwing glances of unequivocal hatred at me. Will you give me another dance later on, and then you can tell me who the unfortunates are whom you detest?"

Nellie nodded; for her new acquaintance rather interested her, and as she was already so deeply engaged that it would be necessary for her to throw over somebody for every dance, she thought she might as well disappoint two people as one.

She took advantage of a pause in the waltz to ask her present partner who the tall man with the beard and the bald head was; and after a moment's hesitation, he answered boldly, "John Bright."

"That he certainly is not," returned Nellie; "even I know better than that. Why, John Bright is a Quaker."

"So he is; you're quite right. And Quakers don't dance, do they? Dear me! what on earth is that man's name? I know it as well as I do my own; but I can't get hold of it. If he isn't Bright, he's somebody of that kind. Plimsoll, or Sir Wilfrid Lawson, or somebody."

Trustworthy information was evidently not to be looked for from that vague person, and Nellie decided to reserve further inquiries for her next partner. But those inquiries were never made; for now a most important and unexpected event took place: nothing less, namely, than an intimation that his Royal Highness desired to dance with Miss Brune;

and in the perturbation consequent upon this announcement Nellie forgot for a time the existence of her new friend. She was a great deal more alarmed than pleased by the honour conferred upon her; and, proud as the retrospect of having been whirled round the room by a live prince might prove to be in after years, the present sensation of dancing in a vast unoccupied space, while the rest of the assemblage stood still and stared, was far too embarrassing to be enjoyable. She passed through the ordeal, however, creditably enough. The Duke of Middlesex was very good-natured and not at all formidable, and he was so obliging as to mould his conversation in such a manner that an occasional "Yes, sir," was all that seemed requisite to support it. When Nellie was allowed to return to her native obscurity, she was almost immediately joined by the Unknown, who came up to claim his promised dance, and who congratulated her upon her conquest of royalty.

"You will be glad to hear that you have produced a most favourable impression upon his Royal Highness. He was talking about you just now to the Duke of Retford, and I heard him say—no; I won't tell you what he said; but it was very complimentary. I hope the approbation was mutual."

"I don't know," said Nellie. "I thought he was very nice; but I couldn't tell you what he talked about if my life depended upon it. I managed to keep my wits about me just enough to dance my best and answer when I was spoken to; but that was all. I never lifted my eyes from the ground. I hadn't even the satisfaction of seeing Mrs. Winnington turning green with jealousy at my triumph."

"Mrs. Winnington? Is she one of the people whom you hate?"

"Yes; she is," answered Nellie emphatically. "I have no hesitation in saying that I hate Mrs. Winnington. And so would you, if you knew her."

"But I do know her."

"Well?"

"Well, our acquaintance is rather a recent one; but I haven't discovered anything hateful about her so far. She struck me as a very civil and amiable old lady."

"Mrs. Winnington civil and amiable! Your acquaintance with her must be recent indeed; or else you must be quite incorrigibly amiable yourself. I don't believe even her own daughters would call her that—at least, two of them wouldn't. I can't answer for the third; because she is like you; it isn't in her to hate anybody."

"At any rate, she may be excused for not hating her own mother."

"I don't know. We are told to love our enemies; but do you think any one really does?"

"The question is whether we have any. My own idea is that very few men or women have enemies, unless they have done something to deserve them."

"Thank you very much."

"Now I have put my foot in it. But I really did not mean to say that you deserved Mrs. Winnington's enmity; I only meant to suggest that perhaps, after all, it didn't exist. However, I know nothing about it; so I can't judge. What is the next name on the black list?"

Nellie considered for a short space. "Now that I come to think of it," she said slowly, "I am not sure that I actually hate any one, except Mrs. Winnington. There are the Stanniforths, father and son, of course."

"Poor Stanniforths, father and son! What have they done? and why are they to be hated as a matter of course?"

"Oh! it is much too long a story to tell," Nellie answered; "and, besides, it would not interest you."

The stranger, however, declared that it would interest him beyond everything; and eventually Miss Brune was induced to give reasons for her bitter animosity against two men whom, as she confessed, she had never even set eyes upon. The whole history of the purchase of Longbourne, and of the subsequent ill-gotten gains derived from the railway company, was related; the low cunning of the Manchester merchant, and the uncomplaining magnanimity of his dupe, were dilated upon in glowing language; and Mrs. Stanniforth's avowed disapproval of the transaction which had placed her in her present home was not forgotten. The waltz, during which the first part of the above colloquy had taken place at intervals, was at an end; and it was upon a balcony overlooking the Duchess's rose-garden that Miss Brune told the story of the family wrongs.

Her hearer, meanwhile, resting his elbows upon the broad balustrade, looked out into the night, and allowed her to finish her narrative without a word of interruption. Then he said:—

"You have run away with an altogether mistaken notion, do you know. I have been acquainted with old Mr. Stanniforth all my life, and I can assure you that he is the last man in the world to drive a hard bargain or take an unfair advantage. Vulgar he may be, according to your notions of vulgarity; but no one has ever accused him of being dishonest. He is a man of business; and a bargain, you know, is a bargain. If I go into the market to buy an estate, or a horse, or whatever it may be, I must use my own judgment as to the value of my purchase. If I didn't think it worth the price asked, I shouldn't give that price. In fact, the chances are that I shouldn't give the price unless, in my opinion, it were worth a little more."

"I once heard of a man," said Nellie, "who bought what appeared to be a glass bead from a pedlar for a few shillings, knowing it to be a valuable diamond. He was what you would call a man of business, I suppose. If Mr. Stanniforth is a friend of yours, I am sorry I mentioned his name; but I am afraid I shall continue to dislike him nevertheless."

"You would not dislike him, if you were to meet him."

"I would not meet him for the world!" cried Nellie. "Luckily, there is not the least chance of my ever doing so; and as for his son, Mr. Tom Stanniforth, who is coming to stay at Longbourne very soon, I shall take good care to keep out of *his* way."

"Isn't that rather hard lines upon poor Tom Stanniforth?"

"I dare say it won't distress him very much," answered Nellie drily.

"But indeed, if you carry out your threat, it will distress him extremely. I happen to be the Tom Stanniforth in question; so I can speak with some authority as to his feelings."

Nellie blessed the friendly darkness which veiled her confusion. Every word that she had said about the elder Stanniforth's dishonesty and plebeian origin came back to her memory with horrible distinctness; she was furious with herself for her stupidity, and if the mischief had not seemed to be past all mending, she would have begged her companion's pardon in the humblest language she could command. Unluckily, however, he broke out into a great jolly laugh; and that was more than her pride could brook.

"It was all your fault!" she exclaimed.

"I know it was. I ought to have told you my name long ago; but the temptation to let you go on was too strong for me. Will you forgive me, Miss Brune, and shall we shake hands upon it?"

But Miss Brune was no longer in a mood either to accept or to offer apologies. "I should like to go in now, please, Mr. Stanniforth," she said, with much dignity. "You can leave me beside Mrs. Winnington."

And as soon as they had re-entered the ball-room, she withdrew her hand from her late partner's arm and, with a little cold bow, gave him his dismissal. He lingered near her for a moment, as if he had something more to say; but, as she turned her head resolutely away from him and began talking with great rapidity to a bystander, he moved off presently, with a half-amused, half-concerned look upon his face, which Nellie saw out of the corner of her eye, and which did not serve to diminish her wrath.

She watched his tall figure skirting the space reserved for the dancers; presently she saw the Duke of Middlesex arrest his progress by a familiar tap on the shoulder; she observed the easy deference with which he talked to the prince, and consoled herself with an inward sneer at the pliability of some people's Radicalism. Shortly afterwards she caught sight of his long legs extended beside Mrs. Winnington's ample skirts, and she thought to herself, "Now he has gone over to the enemy."

All this was most unjust and unfair; but those who amuse themselves by setting traps for their neighbours must not expect the entrapped ones to judge them with strict impartiality. If Nellie could have overheard what was passing between Mr. Stanniforth and the lady at whose side he had chosen to seat himself, she must have admitted that the second of her charges at least was an unfounded one.

"Yes; that is the girl's brother dancing with Edith," Mrs. Winnington was saying. "He is a shade less objectionable than his sister; but that is not high praise. They are anything but a nice family. So shockingly brought up."

"Oh, come!" cried Mr. Stanniforth, "I'm sure you don't mean that."

"If I did not mean it, I should not say it," rejoined Mrs. Winnington tartly; for several things had occurred to put her out of temper that evening, and under such circumstances she could not always retain command over her tongue. Recollecting, however, that she was not yet this gentleman's mother-in-law, she made haste to add, in a more charitable spirit, "One must not be too hard upon them; a widower's children are much to be pitied, and Mr. Brune has allowed his to run wild all their lives. They are not well brought up—I cannot pretend to consider them so—but the fault is not altogether their own, perhaps."

"You told me that they had been brought up almost entirely by Margaret," Mr. Stanniforth remarked; "otherwise I shouldn't have doubted your sincerity. For my own part, I think Miss Brune does Margaret infinite credit. I have not met such an honest, unaffected girl for a long time. She seems to me to have a good deal of character, too; and as for her looks—well, one ought not to praise anybody for possessing good looks, I suppose, however much one may be under their influence. Beauty is a great power, nevertheless. Upon my word, Mrs. Winnington, if I were twenty years younger, I believe I should fall desperately in love with Miss Brune."

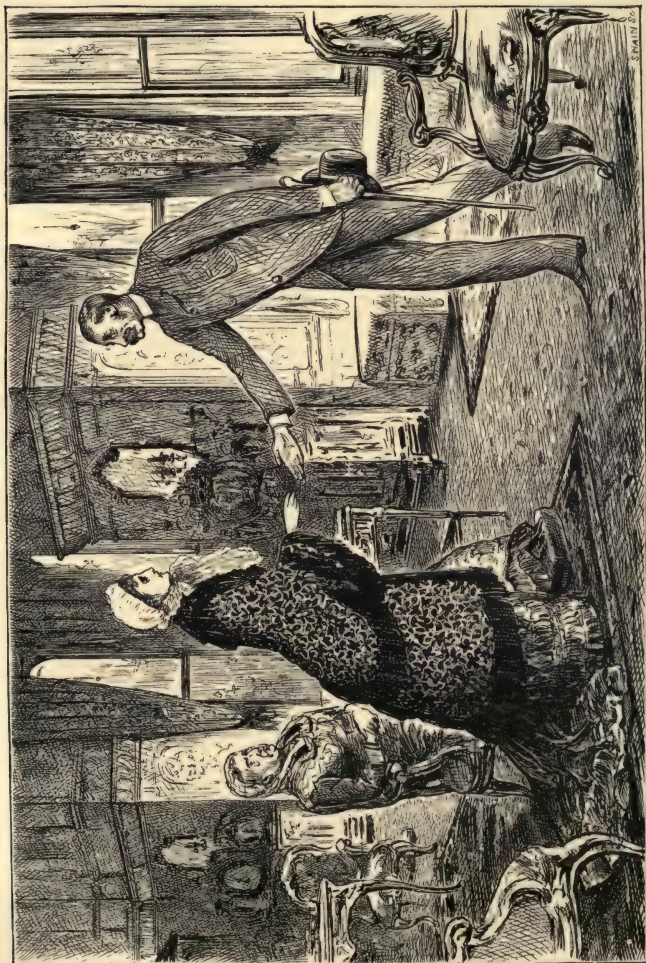
Mrs. Winnington's eye-glasses fell from her hand. She turned, and stared at her neighbour, half horrified, half suspicious. Could he have guessed at the projects which she had formed for his future domestic bliss, and was he amusing himself at her expense with an unseemly jest? She almost hoped that it might be so. But no; the broad smile that lighted up his good-humoured face had not a shade of malice in it; it was obvious that he was expressing his thoughts quite frankly; and poor Mrs. Winnington was within an ace of losing her temper again as she looked at him.

"I can't congratulate you upon your taste," she said curtly.

It really was enough to provoke a saint. At the cost of much pain, labour, and humiliation, she had obtained an invitation to this ball, simply and solely in order that Tom Stanniforth, who, as she had heard, was to be present at it, might dance with her daughter; and here was her reward! The wretched man had danced twice only in the course of the evening—only twice; and both times with the girl whom of all others she would fain have kept out of his way. For of course he would meet her again at Longbourne, and of course she was pretty; Mrs. Winnington was perfectly well aware of that. She was prettier even, perhaps, than Edith; though surely less refined, less aristocratic. But what did a horrid Manchester man care about refinement? Everything

was going wrong. He had not asked Edith for a dance; he evidently did not now intend to do so; and meanwhile Edith was spending a great deal too large a portion of the evening with Walter Brune.

Alas! the world we live in is full of disappointment and discouragement; and what with straitened means, and the gout, and old age creeping on apace, there are moments in which life itself seems but a doubtful blessing, and its prizes, such as they are, hardly worth the worry and weariness of struggling after. But Mrs. Winnington was not one to allow despondency to get the upper hand of her for long; and, as she had plenty of obstinacy, she very generally got her own way in the end. She contrived, upon this occasion, to get Mr. Stanniforth to dance with Edith before the evening was over; and that was something. Rome was not built in a day; middle-aged bachelors were game that required wary stalking; a boy like Walter Brune could not be any serious obstacle in the way of well-laid plans; Nellie was clearly marked out by fate to marry that odious young Marescalchi, who would break her heart, and go to the dogs. Such were the reflections with which Mrs. Winnington comforted herself, in the intervals of slumber, during her fifteen-mile drive home.



"WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN DOING ALL THESE YEARS?"

THE


CORNHILL MAGAZINE.

AUGUST, 1882.

No New Thing.

CHAPTER X.

MR. STANNIFORTH MAKES FRIENDS.



At the age of three-and-forty, the member for Blackport was probably as contented a sample of humanity as could have been found from John o' Groat's to the Land's End. A man who possesses wealth, congenial occupation, a good digestion, and a clear conscience, must be a very extraordinary sort of man indeed if he be not happy; and Tom Stanniforth was by no means an extraordinary man. Some people thought him odd; but his oddity had never taken the form of such base ingratitude to Fortune as dissatisfaction with his lot, nor was he niggardly of his smiles to a world which had treated him so well. He liked the world, and the world liked him; and when he told Nellie that he had no

enemies and hated nobody, he made a statement which was not only true, but which, considering the circumstances of the case, was almost a truism. He may not, perhaps, have deserved any great credit for being in love and charity with all men; but the fact that he was so was generally counted to his credit nevertheless: and this much may, at all events, be claimed for him, that he had not wasted his life, and that he had used his money and his abilities without stint in the service of his

fellow-creatures. What he called his hobbies had all been generous hobbies; and if many of them had ended in failure and some had been extinguished by a cold shower of not undeserved ridicule, a fair percentage at least had borne good fruit. He shrugged his shoulders over his failures, shook the ridicule off his broad back, and plodded on his way, to an accompaniment of cheers and laughter. Had he been an ambitious man, a distinguished political career might have been open to him, for he had plenty of common sense; he had had a long experience of the House of Commons, he loved hard work, and he had that patient diligence in mastering the details of a subject which is one of the rarest and most useful of qualities; but he was not ambitious, and in truth cared not a jot for the game of politics. He called himself a Radical because, in a general way, he thought it was better to progress than to stand still; and he was not so amenable to discipline as he ought to have been; he had more than once taken upon him to play the *enfant terrible*; and thus office never had been, and was now never likely to be, offered to him.

In private life he had hosts of friends, comprising all classes of the community, from royalty down to the operatives, the chimney-sweeps, the discharged criminals, and others whose wrongs he had at different times undertaken to set to rights. No kind of society came amiss to him; and as his purse was always open, his good nature boundless, and his acquaintance with social shibboleths all that could be desired, he was welcome wherever he went. Yet, after something like a quarter of a century of hospitality given and received, he was still a bachelor, and, as some of his friends feared, a confirmed one.

It may be questioned, however, whether any bachelor of less than threescore and ten can be said to be confirmed in his bachelorhood; and perhaps he is never more vulnerable than at that precise period of middle life when mothers commonly give him up in despair. For it is then that the blanks caused by the death or marriage of old friends begin to be felt, and domesticity acquires charms never thought of before, and a new sense of loneliness weighs upon a man's spirits. Tom Stanniforth (no one, by the way, ever called him anything but Tom) was entering upon this critical phase of his career, and was experiencing the sensations incidental thereto, at the time when Mrs. Winnington made up her mind to select another son-in-law from the ranks of the plutocracy. It is needless to say that many kind efforts had been made before then to render his existence a less solitary one; but from one cause and another they had all proved abortive. With his great wealth, and with the knowledge of human nature which he had perforce acquired, it might not have been surprising if he had resolved to lead a single life, as modest heiresses are said to do, from a conviction of the impossibility of ever knowing certainly whether he was loved for his own sake; but, as a matter of fact, he had formed no such determination. He had not married simply because he had never happened to fall very much in

love ; because accidents had prevented his following up a youthful fancy or two ; because, in fact, he had always had plenty of other things to think about. Now, for the first time in the course of his busy and joyous life, he was asking himself whether it was not advisable that he should settle down, and provide his huge, desolate mansion in the Midlands with a mistress ; and he was not unwilling to be vanquished by Mrs. Winnington, whose intentions he perfectly understood, and who, indeed, played her game after a fashion which could hardly have deceived the least suspicious of men. He thought Edith might do very well. She was of course by a great many years his junior, and he was not conscious of being at all in love with her ; but these drawbacks—if drawbacks they were—need not prevent her from making him an excellent wife, nor him from blessing her with the best of husbands. So, since Margaret pressed him to pay her a long visit, and since he had for the moment no other engagements, save such as could be easily got rid of, he decided to make himself comfortable at Longbourne and wait upon events. He might, in the sequel, propose to Edith, or he might not ; and again, she might accept him, or she might not. Either way he had no great mental disturbance to dread.

The popularity to which this fortunate man was accustomed did not fail to attend him in his new quarters. Philip—himself a popular person, though in a different way and from quite other causes—recognised in the new-comer a kindred spirit, and obtained without difficulty his co-operation in a project for private theatricals which Margaret had rather unwillingly consented to think about ; Mr. Brune, who had never shared his daughter's antipathy for the race of Stanniforth, took a great fancy to him, and was pleased to find that he was unaffectedly interested in farming operations ; and Walter's prejudices, which, if less outspoken, were not less deep than his sister's, were overcome at once and for ever when he walked across the park to Longbourne one morning, and found the member for Blackport in his shirt-sleeves practising cricket with the coachman and a couple of stable-helpers. As for the ladies, two at least of them were loud in their praises of him. "He is so genuine," said Mrs. Winnington, who was fond of a stock phrase. And for many a long day her intimates heard much of the genuineness of Tom Stanniforth.

Nevertheless, there was one person who made up her mind that she would have nothing to do with the universal favourite, charm he never so wisely. For a whole week Nellie Brune held herself aloof, finding one excuse after another for absenting herself from Longbourne, privately upbraiding her brother with his apostacy and listening to her father's panegyrics in eloquent silence ; and great was her disgust when, on the eighth day, Mr. Brune brought his friend and supplanter in to luncheon. To avoid speaking to him was hardly practicable, but she was determined not to be gracious ; and she was so far successful that her father, who rarely scolded her, took her to task somewhat severely afterwards for her want of hospitality. But the provoking thing was that Mr.

Stanniforth did not seem to notice it at all. If he had looked conscious or embarrassed, or had shown any signs of being ashamed of himself, her heart might have been softened towards him; but he did nothing of the kind. On the contrary, he totally ignored all previous passages of arms between them, alluded to the Duchess of Retford's ball just as if nothing of a painful nature had occurred on that occasion, and ended by boldly asking Miss Brune to walk round the garden with him and show him her flowers.

"We have no flowers worth looking at," she answered, in a very chilling tone; but he declined to be chilled or to believe this assertion; and the upshot of it was that Nellie had to comply with his request.

She walked a few paces in advance of him, pointing out the various flower-beds with her sunshade, and showing by her manner that she was merely acquitting herself of a task, and of an uncongenial one.

"Petunias flourish very well here; the calceolarias are a failure this year. This is the rose-garden. It is small, as you see; but the soil is considered good for roses, and my father has been very successful with them. He has taken a great many prizes. In fact, he could tell you all about them a great deal better than I can. Quite at the end of that path there is a magnolia-tree which people say is the finest in the county. You can easily find your way, if you care to go and look at it."

Mr. Stanniforth laughed outright. "I see you want to get rid of me," said he; "but I am too old and too thick-skinned to mind a snubbing. And I am determined to be friends with you before I have done with you, Miss Brune."

"Then please consider that we have made friends, and that you have done with me," cried Nellie, with sudden irritability. "I am sure I am not quarrelsome; nobody has ever accused me of being that. I don't think it was very kind or very polite of you to lead me on to make myself ridiculous the other night; but that is all over now, and we need not say any more about it. Probably we shall not meet often again; so it doesn't matter."

"I don't call that making friends," said Tom.

Nellie made no rejoinder for some minutes, and then said, with great deliberation: "I should have thought you might have been satisfied with having made friends with everybody in the house, except me. What can it possibly signify to you whether I like or dislike you? I don't dislike you personally, if that matters: why should I, when I know nothing about you? But we can never be really friends; and you know why. We are hereditary enemies, as the English and French used to be."

"Hereditary enemies!—because my father bought an estate of yours?"

"No; not because he bought it."

"But because he chanced to make money out of it. I wish with all my heart that it had not so happened; but a fair bargain is no robbery, for all that."

"We won't argue the question," said Nellie calmly. "I have my notion of a fair bargain, and you have yours."

Mr. Stanniforth reddened a little. "I can't allow that this is a case about which there can be two opinions," he said. "Really you are very—very——"

"Wrongheaded?" suggested Nellie, smiling. Her equanimity began to return as her adversary's showed signs of disturbance.

"Well, I should not have ventured to use the word myself; but if you think it applicable——"

"But of course I don't. I think that it is I who am right and you who are wrong. You are much cleverer than I am, and I daresay that, if we went on arguing, you would get the best of it. Only that wouldn't make us any the more friends."

"I suppose not. Very well, then, I will be the friend and you shall be the foe. It will be uncomfortable; but it can't be helped. In the meantime, I must go back to Margaret and tell her that I have failed ignominiously in my mission."

"What mission?" Nellie asked.

"They want you to take a part in the play that young Marescalchi is getting up. Margaret maintained that you would never be persuaded to act on the same stage with me; but I made bold to say that I could persuade you. I could not suppose, you see, that you would pay me the compliment of cutting off your nose to spite your face."

Now, had this question of the theatricals been broached ten minutes earlier, it is certain that Nellie would have repudiated all connection with them; but the wiliness of Tom's diplomacy had its effect upon her.

"I don't know what you mean by 'cutting off my nose to spite my face,'" she answered. "I promised Philip ever so long ago that I would act when the time came; and I always keep my engagements."

So the envoy was enabled to state, at dinner that night, that no substitute for Miss Brune in the forthcoming entertainment need be sought for. Whereupon Mrs. Winnington remarked that in her young days it had not been customary to encourage school-girls to give themselves ridiculous and impertinent airs; and Philip, from the other side of the table, observed that one of the faults of the present system of education was the teaching of accomplishments which so many of the last generation had shown themselves capable of acquiring without any aid.

This graceful sally was Philip's sole contribution to the harmony of the evening. He was silent and preoccupied and unlike himself; and Margaret, watching him furtively, feared that he must be ill. The fact was that Colonel Kenyon, who had been absent on a visit to some members of his own family, had returned that afternoon; and the sight of the Colonel's face put Philip disagreeably in mind of that encounter at the corner of the Green Park which he had almost succeeded in banishing from his memory. He was reminded of it in a still more

direct and unpleasant manner in the smoking-room afterwards, when Hugh attacked him suddenly with—

“By the way, didn’t I see you walking in Piccadilly the other day?”

Philip shook his head. “I haven’t been in London at all since I saw you last, except just to drive from one station to another. London in August is rather too hot for people who haven’t lived in Madras.”

“Well, I could have sworn it was you,” persisted Hugh. “In fact, I should have spoken to you, if you hadn’t been walking with a—lady.”

“A lady!—and in August! For heaven’s sake, Colonel Kenyon, don’t make these awful accusations when Mrs. Winnington is present, or I shall have to write to Gloucestershire to prove an alibi.”

Hugh said no more; but he looked rather oddly at the young man; and then Philip knew that he had lied in vain. A moment’s consideration, too, showed him that he had lied unnecessarily, which was worse. Why should he not at once have admitted the impeachment, accompanying his admission with a gentle insinuation that it is not always convenient to be recognised? Had he done so, Kenyon would have been convicted of a breach of good manners, and no slur would have been cast upon himself, save that of being a young man like other young men. But this sensible reflection came too late to be of any use, and from that day forth Colonel Kenyon’s name was added to Philip’s list of persons suspected and disliked.

The compliment was in some degree reciprocated perhaps; but Hugh was not a man who made up his mind hastily for or against any one; moreover, he had promised to be a friend to Marescalchi, and meant to keep his promise. After the latter had left the smoking-room, Tom Stanniforth said, in his brisk, quick way:

“That is a clever young fellow; something ought to be made out of him. Margaret is doing her best to spoil him, though.”

“I don’t know what more she could have done for him than she has done,” said Hugh, who, whatever his private opinion may have been, did not choose to hear Margaret criticised by others. “I don’t know what more any father could do for his son than to send him to Eton and Oxford, and allow him to choose his own profession.”

“But the difference between a father and Margaret is that a father would make his son understand that, when he has chosen a profession, he must stick to it; or at least that he must fix upon a profession of some kind.”

“Well, he has chosen the law, I believe.”

“He has changed his mind, it seems. He informed us in a casual sort of way at luncheon yesterday that he didn’t mean to be a lawyer; and when somebody asked him what he did mean to be, he said he hadn’t the ghost of an idea. Now, you know, that sort of thing will never do. I don’t know Margaret well enough to interfere; but you might say a word or two, might you not? Women don’t understand the importance of time in these matters.”

"I will speak to the lad himself," said Hugh, a good deal disturbed by this intelligence.

And next day, accordingly, he did take an opportunity of expounding to Philip his simple notions of duty. He made his lecture as little didactic as he could; but he knew that good advice is seldom palatable to youth, and was fully prepared to receive a civil hint to mind his own business. Philip, however, took his intervention in very good part, and disclaimed all intention of leading an idle life.

"I should never make my fortune as a barrister," he said; "it isn't my line at all. But there are many other excellent ways of earning one's bread. What should you think of the Church, now?"

"The Church! Well, really—if you ask me, I must confess I should hardly say you were fitted to be a parson," answered Hugh, a little shocked; for he had an immense reverence for the cloth, and was not very quick at taking up a joke.

"Oh, don't you think so? This is very discouraging. I have always been given to understand that, though I might be a little deficient in power of close reasoning, I had great ease of language and a good turn for paradox—just the sort of gifts that are calculated to make a man shine in the pulpit and come to howling grief in a court of law. And I can't help thinking that I should look very nice in a short surplice and a coloured stole. 'The Reverend Philip Marescalchi'—it has a fine ecclesiastical ring. Or perhaps we might say 'Father Marescalchi,' for I should certainly go in for what old Langley calls 'advanced Church teaching.' How pleased Meg would be! But perhaps, after all, I haven't got a vocation; and the Stock Exchange might be more suitable upon the whole."

"You know best what you are fitted for," said Hugh, who began to have a dim suspicion that he was being laughed at. "Take up any trade or profession that you please, so that you take up one or another. All that I meant to impress upon you was that you ought not to give Margaret a moment's uneasiness, if you can help it."

"There was no need to impress that upon me," answered Philip. And Hugh, watching him, wondered why he sighed and became grave and sobered all of a sudden.

The truth was that Philip's love for Margaret was the strongest feeling of his nature. It was not strong, certainly, in the sense of exercising much influence over his conduct; but it was strong enough to afflict him with occasional twinges of remorse and sometimes even with wakefulness at night. Some uneasiness he had caused her in the past, and what he had done and proposed to do must needs cause her something more than uneasiness in the future. It was his habit to enjoy the present, and to live for it alone; but, every now and again, a chance remark or incident would bring his true position vividly before him; and when that occurred, he would fall into sudden and deep despondency, as he did now.

The two men had been to the stables, and were crossing the lawn towards the house. As they approached it, a carriage drove past, in which was seated a lady who bent forward to look at them. Marescalchi raised his hat, and Hugh mechanically did the same.

"Who is that?" he inquired.

"An old friend of yours," answered Philip; "Lady Travers. She pays us a visit of a few hours about twice in the course of the year—when she gets leave from her husband."

"Dear me!" exclaimed Hugh; "so that was Kate Travers. I should never have known her again."

"Ah, I daresay she doesn't look as young as she did ten years ago. Old Travers leads her a deuce of a life. They say he sends for her and beats her whenever he feels one of his bad fits of gout coming on; I don't know whether it's true or not. Anyhow, he won't let a single one of her relations enter his house. For some years, I believe, he devoted all his energies to picking a quarrel with Mrs. Winnington; but she wouldn't be quarrelled with at any price, and the story is that at last, in despair, he offered her five hundred a year upon condition that she would swear by all she held most sacred never to speak to him again as long as she lived. You ought to hear the dear old lady talk about him. 'Poor George! Such a constant sufferer, and yet such a marvellous constitution! The doctors say he may last for many years yet. I wish I were able to help poor Kate more in nursing him; but with all my other duties, you know,' &c., &c. The joke of it is that she doesn't know whether to wish for his death or not; for he assuredly won't leave her anything in his will, and it isn't absolutely certain that she would manage to get five hundred a year, or the value of it, out of the widow."

Philip's fits of dejection seldom lasted long. The incident of Lady Travers's appearance was quite sufficient to divert his thoughts and to enable him, subsequently, to take his full share in the entertainment of the new arrival.

Mrs. Winnington was talking to her eldest daughter when Hugh entered the drawing-room. "And how did you leave poor George? Not any better? How terribly trying it is for you! I wish it were in my power—oh, yes, my dear, I quite understand that he wouldn't like it; I know what gout is, and how irritable it makes the best of us. Such a charming ball at the Duchess of Retford's the other night; I half hoped you might have been there. Edith enjoyed herself immensely."

Lady Travers, tall, thin, and pale, with blue eyes half closed, like her mother's, but with none of that lady's grandeur of presence, got up and held out her hand, saying, with a faint smile and a little sigh, "Well; what have you been doing all these years?"

"I have been growing old," answered Hugh, and then wished he had held his tongue; for in truth time had been far more merciful to him than to his questioner, and the rejoinder which she made was almost an inevitable one,

"Like all of us. But you at least are recognisable, which it seems that I am not. I knew you at once, when I drove past you just now; but you didn't know me."

"You take no care of yourself whatever, Kate," struck in Mrs. Winnington. "A woman who neglects her personal appearance neglects her duty to society. If you go on as you have been doing, you won't be fit to be seen by the time you are forty."

Lady Travers shrugged her shoulders slightly, and sank back again upon the sofa from which she had risen. She was a faded woman, whose beauty, once famous, was traceable only in the perfect mould of her brow and nose and in the classical ripple of her golden hair. The lips which Hugh remembered so full and red and constantly curved into smiles were thin now and nearly colourless; the contour of the face was rounded no longer; the chin was sharp, and there were hollows in the cheeks. Hugh's soft heart was touched by the sight of this melancholy wreck. He seated himself beside the friend of his youth, and began to chat familiarly about bygone days; but he failed to elicit any responsive cheerfulness from her. Perhaps the only privilege that Lady Travers had gained by her elevation in rank was that of not troubling herself to talk when she did not feel inclined; and apparently she did not feel inclined now. At luncheon she only roused herself from her apathy to snub Tom Stanniforth once or twice in a wholly uncalled-for and inappropriate manner; insomuch that Hugh's compassion became worn out at last, and he wondered whether she had driven twelve miles from the country-house where she was staying with her gouty lord merely in order to act the part of a general kill-joy and to say disagreeable things to the most inoffensive and good-humoured of men.

Before she went away, however, he heard from her own lips not only that her visit had had a purpose, but what that purpose was. It was late in the afternoon, and her carriage was waiting for her at the door, when she walked quickly across the lawn to the shady bench upon which he was lounging, and announced that she wanted to speak to him. There was a pink flush upon her cheeks, and her manner was as excited as it had hitherto been passionless.

"Hugh," she said, "I believe you might put a stop to this disgraceful business, if you chose to bestir yourself. I am powerless; and unless you make an effort to save the poor girl, nobody will."

"What on earth are you talking about?" asked Hugh, staring.

"About Edith, of course; you surely don't mean to pretend that you don't know what is going on. Do you intend to sit still, with your hands folded, and see her married by force to that man Stanniforth, who is old enough to be her father, and whom she detests?"

"But, my dear Lady Travers, I don't think she does detest him. As far as I can judge, she likes him very much; and so does everyone else for that matter. As for his age——"

"As for his age, Lord Travers is old enough to be my grandfather.

Is that what you were going to say? I should have thought one such marriage was enough for the family."

"It isn't exactly my business, you see," said Hugh; "but I am bound to say that I think Stanniforth is a capital fellow, and that his wife has every chance of being a happy woman."

"That is what Margaret keeps on repeating. Margaret doesn't care; she is wrapped up in that theatrical boy of hers; and so long as he gets everything that he wants, she thinks the whole world ought to be contented. Besides, she is afraid of my mother, like the rest of us. Mr. Stanniforth may be a very decent sort of man; I don't say he is not. But if Edith does not love him, she will be miserable with him all the same. I ought to know something about the consequences of a loveless marriage, if anybody does."

This was so undeniable that Hugh thought it wisest to ignore the observation. It also struck him that Lady Travers would have shown better taste if she had kept her domestic misfortunes to herself.

"Well," he remarked, "she has only to refuse him. Stanniforth isn't an ogre, when all is said."

"Only to refuse him!" echoed Lady Travers scornfully; "that is so easy and simple, is it not? As if you did not know what we Winningtons are! We are as weak as water, the whole of us, and my mother has always made us do exactly what she pleased. In my case it was not altogether her fault; I wanted to be a countess; I thought it would be a fine thing; and I had my reward. Edith, poor child, is not so ambitious. All she wants is to be allowed to marry the man of her choice; and if by any means I can save her from such a life as mine has been, I will do it."

"The man of her choice? There is such a person, then?"

"Never mind about that," answered Lady Travers, laughing a little. "Indeed, I don't know myself whether there is or not. She writes to me sometimes, and from different things that she has said, I fancied that there might be somebody. But that, after all, is not the important matter."

"Well, I don't know," said Hugh; "I think it is rather important. Because, if she didn't happen to care for any one else, it seems to me that Tom Stanniforth——"

"Oh, bother Tom Stanniforth!" interrupted Lady Travers impatiently. "I am sick of hearing of all his good qualities. I tell you that if he were an angel from heaven it would make no difference."

Hugh rubbed his nose in perplexity. "But what would you have me do?" he asked; "Why do you come to me?"

"Because people always do come to you when they are in trouble, and because there is nobody else," answered Lady Travers conclusively. "You can do a great deal to prevent it, if you will only try. You can get Margaret over to her side, for one thing, and that will be so much gained. You might speak to the man himself, too, if necessary; and

you are not frightened of my mother, I suppose. I must not stay any longer. I am behind my time as it is, and I shall be made to suffer for it. Now remember, Hugh, I count upon you to do your best. Perhaps I may be able to help a little by-and-by; but I can't be sure. Good-bye." And with that she hastened away to her carriage, leaving Colonel Kenyon to sink down upon the bench again, muttering something that was not exactly a blessing upon womankind in general.

"It is time that I made a stand against this kind of thing, you know," said he to himself. "If one lot of these good people mean to continue egging me on to defeat the designs of the other lot, a day will certainly come when they will fall upon me with one accord, and, after beating me to death, will shake hands over my prostrate body. Why am I to be singled out to do everybody's dirty work, I should like to know? Already this morning I have been preaching to one of them, and have got sneered at for my pains; and now, if you please, I am to interfere between mother and daughter, and, in all probability, to make myself offensive to the one person in the world whom I would cut off my hand sooner than offend. It's out of all reason to expect me to do it. At the same time, if it were in any way possible to out-manœuvre that old harridan——"

"Has Kate been with you all this time?" asked Mrs. Winnington, appearing suddenly from behind a clump of evergreens at his back. "We were wondering how it was that we did not hear the carriage drive away. What have you been talking about?"

And Hugh, with a guilty air, answered vaguely, "Oh, about all sorts of things."

CHAPTER XI.

COLONEL KENYON GOES TO CHURCH.

THE Reverend Ethelbert Langley was one of the many clergymen of the Established Church of Great Britain who serenely defy the law every day, with no fear of aggrieved parishioners and the Court of Arches before their eyes. Mr. Langley's parishioners never dreamt of considering themselves aggrieved, and would perhaps have been rather ungrateful had they so considered themselves. For so many years had he been rector of Longbourne; for so many years had he devoted himself, body and soul, to the welfare of his flock; so unweariedly had he visited the sick, and with so unstinting a hand had he ministered to the necessities of the poor, that it would have been shabby indeed—so these illogical folks argued—to dispute his right to assume certain positions at certain times in his own church, or to array himself, while in the performance of his sacred duties, in garments which varied in hue with the progress of the seasons. A fine broad spirit of toleration prevailed in this rustic

parish, where the benefit of possessing a spiritual guide at once well-to-do, open-handed, and a bachelor, was appreciated at its proper value, and where the looking of a gift horse in the mouth was justly held to be an unworthy and foolish action.

Toleration, however (as Mr. Swainson, farmer and churchwarden, would often remark) was one thing, and bigotry was another. He didn't himself see no virtue in turning away from roast mutton of a Friday and blowing of yourself out with jam-tarts and such-like; but he hoped he knowed his duty to his weaker brethren, and if it made the missus feel better than her neighbours to let alone butcher's meat once a week, why what he said was, let her do it. Vestments agin was innercent kind of things as couldn't do no harm to no one, and incense was a beautiful smell, when once a body got his nose used to the tickling of it; but drat them daily services! How was a woman to get through her daily work and see to things like she oughter, if she was to be gadding off to church every blessed morning, same as if 'twas a Sunday? Nunno! them ways of going on was well enough for quality, as had nothing better to ockipy them; but farmers' wives had their home dooties to 'tend ter, and if Mrs. Swainson took to neglecting hers, him and parson should fall out, and that was all about it.

Probably good Mrs. Swainson was not very eager to attend matins at eight A.M.; and, truth to tell, the quality, despite the leisure with which they were credited, were scarcely more zealous than she in this matter. For it is evident that church at eight implies rising before seven, and, deeply as Mr. Langley was revered by the ladies of the vicinity, there were few of them who deemed it incumbent upon them to perform such a feat as that for his sake. Hence it was that the daily congregation usually consisted of Mrs. Stanniforth, of the village schoolmistress, of two or three old women who had an eye to tea and snuff, and of the gardener from the rectory, who rang the bell. The first of these was as regular an attendant as the rector himself. Summer and winter, fair weather and foul, Mrs. Stanniforth was sure to be seen kneeling in her place when the clock struck eight, unless by any chance she happened to be absent from home. She had formed and maintained the habit partly because it had been represented to her in the light of a duty, and partly because she particularly disliked early rising; for Margaret was a victim to that not uncommon form of religious fervour which finds solace in the wearing of hair shirts.

Not many of those who partook of the hospitality of Longbourne suspected that their hostess had been up and about three hours before she poured out their coffee for them at breakfast; but Hugh, whom a ten years' residence in the East had accustomed to ways which are said to ensure health, wealth, and wisdom, had seen her tall figure many a time flitting across the park on misty mornings, and had often longed to follow her. He had been withheld from gratifying this very harmless inclination by a dread of being thought intrusive, as well as by

something of the same feeling which leads people to speak in a whisper on entering a church ; but, on the day succeeding that of Lady Travers's visit, he overcame his scruples and set off after Margaret, thinking to himself that the end justified the means. Since he had taken upon him to persuade her of the iniquity of mammon-worship, it seemed wisest to attack her at a time when worldly prudence might be presumed to occupy the lowest place in her thoughts.

Through the sunny garden he followed in her track, under the branches of scented lime-trees, along a narrow footpath, and across the meadows where her feet had passed and had "left the daisies rosy ;" and it was characteristic of the man that, as he walked, he thought less of the opportunity of prosecuting his own love affairs than of lending a helping hand to those of a young woman who had not the courage to stand up for herself, and in whom—except in so far as that she was Margaret's sister—he felt no very lively interest.

It was not a part of his plan to overtake Margaret before she reached the church door. He slipped in behind her unobserved, and dropped on his knees, as she did, when the tinkling bell ceased, and Mr. Langley, after a few inaudible words of exhortation, proceeded, in a hurried, mumbling voice, with "Wherefore I pray and beseech you," &c.

The service was soon over—too soon, even, for one of those who took part in it. The peace and gloom of the little, dark building soothed Hugh's senses ; he would fain have lingered within its quiet precincts ; he felt a nervous unwillingness to set about the delicate business which he had taken in hand, and to sow the seeds of discord in a community which had hitherto subsisted harmoniously enough. Full well he knew that whoever declared war upon Mrs. Winnington must reckon with no mean foe ; "and what," he thought, "if Margaret herself should turn me the cold shoulder ?" Such a calamity appeared by no means beyond the range of calculation.

Her face was grave and rather sad, as she passed down the aisle ; but it broke out into smiles when she came upon Colonel Kenyon, standing, hat in hand, in the porch.

"You here !" she exclaimed. "Did you come to meet me ? I hope you did, because I want very much to have a talk with you, and somehow or other I never see you alone now."

This was, at all events, a hopeful beginning. Hugh confessed that she had rightly divined the reason of his presence there. "I came to meet you ; I didn't come to say my prayers," he acknowledged, laughing.

"There was nothing to prevent your doing both," she rejoined. "But perhaps the world is too much with you, as it is with Mrs. Prosser, who says she would be obliged to give up her situation if she had to forgive the housemaids their trespasses every morning before breakfast. Once a week, by making a good gulp, the thing may be done ; but to wipe off all scores once in the twenty-four hours would be simply to court anarchy. So Prosser remains in bed."

"I am willing to forgive because I want to be forgiven," said Hugh. "The fact is that I am going to do a little bit of trespassing myself. I haven't trespassed often upon your patience and good-nature during all this long time, have I, Margaret? I haven't interfered unwarrantably, or offered my opinion without having been asked for it, even though I have been in a sort of way your guardian."

"You have always been all that was most kind and considerate, and I don't know what you mean by talking about interference. Surely I need not tell you that you may say anything and everything that you like to me."

"Ah, yes; we all allow our friends that privilege until they make use of it. Interference is interference, call it what you will. I know you will think me meddling and officious; but there's no help for it. I said I would speak to you, and now I've got to do it."

He looked so downcast at the prospect that Margaret was filled with surprise and compunction. "Why, Hugh," she exclaimed, "what a foolish old fellow you are! You used not to be troubled with so many scruples, and indeed there is no necessity for them. I am quite prepared for the scolding which no doubt I deserve. It is about Philip, of course."

Hugh shook his head; but she either did not see or misunderstood this gesture of dissent. "And it so happens," she went on, "that that is the very subject upon which I want to consult you. You mustn't think that his deciding to give up the Bar is not a great disappointment to me; but what can I do? I can't push him by main force into a profession which he dislikes; and surely it would not be wise to do so, if I could."

"It strikes me that a little coercion would be a very wholesome thing for him," replied Hugh, thankful for this diversion. "As for your not being able to force him, why, of course, you can force him into a profession of some kind. I mean to say you can simply stop the supplies. Are you quite sure that it is the Bar, and not work of any description, that he dislikes?"

"No," answered Margaret slowly; "I am not sure: to you I don't mind saying that I am not sure. Some people feel pain more than others, and I fancy that some people, too, abhor drudgery more than others."

"Oh, there are drones in every hive."

Margaret continued, without noticing this severe interpolation. "I have always had that feeling about Philip. He is like the lilies of the field, beautiful but useless. That is not his fault," she added, turning suddenly upon Hugh, with a slightly defiant ring in her voice.

"It will be his misfortune, though; and no small misfortune to a penniless man. If that is the view he takes of himself, I am very sorry for him. You ought not to encourage it, Margaret; you ought not, indeed. It isn't a question of whether an idle life is or is not a miser-

able thing in itself; the fact of the matter is that some men can afford to be purely ornamental, and others can't. Marescalchi should know that he is one of those who can't."

"He does know it; but there are so many things that one knows to be true and yet cannot always realise. We all know that we shall die some day; but we don't behave as if we believed in the possibility of any such thing. When I die," added Margaret with a sigh, "poor Philip will be cast adrift upon the world with only a very small fortune to help him through it. That is what troubles me so; for I haven't been able to save, Hugh, in spite of all my wise resolutions. I thought at first that I could easily lay by half my income; but, as things have turned out, it has been quite the other way, and it is all that I can do to make both ends meet. You did not think I was such a spendthrift, did you?"

"I know that your money is not spent upon yourself," said Hugh, with a shade of indignation in his voice.

"It is spent in ways that please myself," she returned, quietly. "I can't claim any superiority over the people who pay thousands a year to their dressmakers, because I don't happen to care about dresses. Circumstances have obliged me to find my pleasure in the pleasure of others, and that is how my money goes. It sounds unselfish; but it is not so really; and the proof is that, if I had thought a little more about Philip's happiness years ago, I should not have accustomed him to a luxurious style of living. Now it has come to this, that I may die any day, and leave him in what to him would seem almost like absolute want."

This affecting prospect failed to touch Hugh's feelings; but he was greatly alarmed at the suggestion of Margaret's sudden decease.

"What makes you say that?" he asked quickly. "Is anything the matter? You are not looking at all well."

"I never was better in my life," she answered, laughing; "but one can't tell what may happen. My lungs are not all right, as you know; and we are a consumptive family; and the insurance offices refuse to have anything to do with me, which is a great bore. In short——"

"In short, Marescalchi will have to work for his living, and give up lazy habits. And a very good thing too."

"But really, Hugh, he is not lazy; he doesn't mind putting himself to any amount of trouble about theatricals, for instance, or anything in which he is interested. What I doubt is his power of applying himself to work in which he is *not* interested. I often think that he is best suited for some kind of artistic career—something independent, something exciting, something that might bring quick successes."

"Then he had better put on spangled tights, and tumble in the ring. After all, I believe the stage is more in his line than anything else," said Hugh, who was growing a little weary of discussing Philip's aptitudes, and who was far from suspecting how nearly his notions corresponded with that young gentleman's own upon this point.

“Don't be ill-natured, Hugh,” said Margaret; and he apologised at once.

“I didn't mean to be ill-natured; I am sure you know that. It slipped out. My bark is worse than my bite.”

In truth Colonel Kenyon believed that he was capable of saying extremely sharp things upon occasion, and frequently took himself to task at night for having uttered some such withering sarcasm as the above.

The two friends had left the church far behind them in the course of their conference, and were now walking across the short grass of the park, which the sun had already dried. The time seemed to have come for Lady Travers's envoy to discharge himself of his mission; and he was knitting his brows and cudgelling his brains in the effort to find some artful method of leading up to the subject when Margaret took up the conversation with—

“Now I am going to inflict another of my troubles upon you. You remember what I told you, the day you arrived, about Tom Stanniforth and Edith?”

“Ah!” sighed Hugh, drawing a long breath of relief and satisfaction.

She glanced at him interrogatively. “Have you heard anything? Did Tom speak to you about it?”

“No, but Lady Travers did. She took me into her confidence yesterday afternoon, before she went away.”

“Did she?” exclaimed Margaret, in a tone of some vexation; “I wonder what made her do that.”

“I can't think. But she did; and, to tell you the truth, I wish she hadn't. I told her it was none of my business, and all that; but she had got it into her head that I could do what she couldn't; and so—there it was. She said I might get you over to Edith's side perhaps. I don't know why she should have imagined so; but——”

“Edith's side!” cried Margaret; “but I am on Edith's side; and so, of course, is my mother, if Kate would only see it. She made us very unhappy yesterday by the things she said. Is it likely that my mother would wish for anything that would make her daughter miserable?”

Hugh was eloquently silent.

“You don't understand my mother,” Margaret resumed, after waiting in vain for a reply. “Because she is anxious that Edith should marry well, you think her mercenary and scheming; and yet, when a father tries to put his son in the way of becoming a rich man, you say he is only doing his duty. To a woman there is but one means open of obtaining riches, and every one allows that riches are desirable in themselves.”

“You used not to think so.”

“Nor do I now—for myself; but I am exceptional. Generally speaking, parents wish their children to be spared the pinch of poverty;

and if any woman told me that she would not prefer a rich son-in-law to a poor one, I shouldn't believe her. It seems to me that there can be no possible harm in giving a girl the chance of marrying a man who is not only rich but kind and good."

"I quite agree with you; but you wouldn't have the girl marry a man because he was rich, and kind, and good, if she didn't love him."

"No; only I think those would be very good reasons for loving him; and I am quite sure that it would be an excellent thing for Edith if she could care for Tom Stanniforth. He evidently admires her, and, to the best of my belief, she likes him. At all events, there is this to be said, that she does not like anybody else better."

Hugh began to laugh. "None so blind as those who won't see," he remarked. "Why, my dear Margaret, where have your eyes been, and what do you think is likely to happen when boys and girls are together all day long? I don't pretend to be specially quick-sighted in such matters; but even I could have told you and Mrs. Winnington that there was some risk in providing Edith with a good-looking young man for a constant companion."

Margaret stood still, and clasped her hands nervously. "Oh! what do you mean?" she exclaimed. "Surely it isn't Philip!"

"No, no; it isn't Philippe le Bel, Philip the Eternal and the Inevitable—it isn't Philip this time. There, I beg your pardon; but really, you know, Philip is not the only good-looking young man in the world. There's no accounting for tastes; and, for my own part, I confess that I think Walter Brune the handsomer of the two."

"Walter Brune!" repeated Margaret, incredulously; "he is only a boy. Walter cannot be thinking of marrying; he has really no prospects whatever, poor fellow. Mr. Brune is not at all well off, as I daresay you know; and he was telling me, the other day, that he very much regretted now that he had not brought Walter up for some profession. It has always been a sort of tradition with them that the eldest son should do nothing, and the idea was that Walter should remain at home and occupy himself with farming until, in due course, he succeeded his father as owner of Broom Leas; but it seems that of late years the farm has not even paid its way, and, with all that family to be provided for, you may imagine what chance there is of poor Walter's being able to support a wife. I feel sure that you must be mistaken about him."

"I may be—only somehow I don't think I am. Young people usually fall in love first, and turn their attention to ways and means afterwards. It is a pity that it should be so; but we must take human nature as we find it."

Colonel Kenyon spoke a little drily; for he was disappointed at finding that Margaret viewed this incipient romance from so commonplace and conventional a standpoint. It would have been more like her, and more womanly, he thought, to have at once espoused the cause of the needy lover; and, had she done so, he would have been quite

prepared to argue upon the other side, to expatiate upon the folly of long engagements, and to point out how impracticable it was to live upon love. As she said nothing, but walked on with her eyes fixed upon the ground, he felt bound to continue in the same strain as he had begun.

"Supposing that I am right in my conjecture, and that Mrs. Winnington discovers a hitch in her programme, I hope she will remember that she has only herself to thank for it."

Margaret shook her head sorrowfully. "No," she said; "it is my fault. If there is anything between Walter and Edith it is my stupidity that has brought it about. To you it must seem as if my stupidity had been very great indeed; but you don't know how difficult it is to realise that a few years convert children into men and women. Philip is different; he has always been old for his age, and he has seen so much of the world. But Walter is a big schoolboy in all his habits still. It was so much a matter of course that he should be continually in and out of the house that it never occurred to me to make any change when Edith and my mother came to live with me, or to suppose that he would think of Edith, or she of him, in that way. I knew it was essential that she should marry money, and I always expected to hear that some one had been found for her in London. I had my own hopes about Philip; I know—or, at least, I think I know—who will be his wife some day; and Walter—well, I suppose I forgot that, as you say, people will fall in love, whether they can afford to marry or not. I am the one who is to blame."

"That is to say that you are the one who will be blamed—which is not quite the same thing," remarked Hugh.

"Oh, as far as that goes, I shall never cease to blame myself. Nothing can come of this attachment, you know, if it exists—nothing good, that is; nothing but tears and disappointments, and perhaps quarrels. Even supposing, for the sake of argument, that my mother could be brought to consent to an engagement, Mr. Brune never would."

"Well, I don't know about that. You seem to think that he will be willing enough to let his daughter engage herself to a young gentleman with extravagant tastes, no money, and no career. My own impression is that when once Mrs. Winnington's opposition is broken down the battle will be as good as won."

"Do you really wish to make a battle of it, then? and are you, of all men, going to proclaim yourself the champion of two silly lovers?" asked Margaret, laughing a little. "I should have thought lovers were the last people in the world to arouse your sympathy."

At this Hugh winced slightly, and probably she saw that her words had hurt him, for she made haste to add, "I know you sympathise with everybody who is in tribulation, though; you would like to make the whole human race happy, if you could. That is the difference between you and me; you serve others without thinking about yourself, while I do the same, or make a feeble effort at doing it, because it pleases

myself. But, Hugh, there would be no kindness in showing sympathy—active sympathy, I mean—with these two. Just think of it. The utmost that they could hope for would be a vague prospect of being married some day; and ‘some day’ could only mean after Mr. Brune’s death—nothing else that I know of could put them into possession of a sufficient income. Don’t you see what the end of it would be sure to be? After a few years it would all be broken off; and though that might not be an irreparable misfortune to Walter, I am afraid it might very easily be so to Edith. In such cases it is always the woman who suffers.”

“Ah!” said Hugh; “it’s a crooked business, look at it which way you will.”

“Every business that I meddle with goes crooked!” cried Margaret, with a sudden burst of despondency. “I don’t know how or why it is; but so it is. I suppose I must deserve to fail, or I should hardly fail as invariably as I do.”

“Oh, but you must not reproach yourself so far as this affair is concerned,” said Hugh, all his inclination towards sternness melting away at the sight of her distress. “After all, we know nothing. Lady Travers and I may have been too hasty in jumping to conclusions. Anyhow, you have done the best that you could do for the girl; you have given her a capital chance of establishing herself, and if she is so perverse as to like the poor man better than the rich one, it is no fault of yours.”

“I ought not to have allowed her the chance of liking the poor one,” Margaret sighed. “How everything comes round to a question of money! I used to think that the one great blessing of being rich would be that one would not need to trouble one’s self with that detestable subject; but somehow it seems that there is no escape from it. My money has never done any good to me, and sometimes I am afraid that it has done no good to other people either.”

“You wanted to get rid of it once,” Hugh remarked, with a faint smile.

“So I do still; I have not changed. And, indeed, I do get rid of it,” she added, glancing at her companion with a half-deprecatory laugh; “only I am not sure that anybody is the better off. The older I grow the more plainly I see that wealth is the source of all evil. You told me long ago that it would at least give me independence; but it has not done anything of the kind. Some people, you know, are not fit to be independent; and evidently I am one of them. I want somebody to order me about, and to tell me when I make a fool of myself.”

“You want somebody to take care of you and protect you, perhaps,” said Hugh, with a slight tremor in his voice.

“That is a prettier way of saying the same thing. However, no one seems inclined to undertake the task, except Mr. Langley; and Mr. Langley, unfortunately, won’t do. At one time I thought I would try

it; but when I found that he would be satisfied with nothing short of unconditional submission, I had to beat a hasty retreat, and I don't think he has ever quite forgiven me. A director is a comfort in some ways; but then he must not be an absolute tyrant."

"Ah! I should not be so exacting," murmured Hugh.

She did not in the least guess his meaning; but, seeing how serious he looked, it occurred to her that he might fancy himself slighted by that bygone craving for priestly guidance.

"I don't mean to say that I ever thought of consulting Mr. Langley as a friend or a man of the world," she explained. "You know that you are my one and only friend and adviser. But one is not obliged to take advice, you see; and when it is good advice one very seldom does take it. What I want, in order to keep me from doing foolish things with my eyes open, is authority; and if I could have brought myself to believe in Mr. Langley's claims to obedience, I daresay I should have been preserved from the commission of many injudicious actions; but he tells me I have no right understanding of the apostolic succession. The upshot of it is that I must go bungling on in my own way."

Hugh was not listening to her. His sober brain was in a whirl; he hardly knew how much he had said or implied. Accident—a sudden feeling of great compassion, an inward revolt against the falseness of his position—had led him to the very verge of the leap at which he had been craning for so long, and now he had lost his head a little, as timid riders will in such situations. He might have chosen his time and place ill; calamity might be waiting with grinning jaws to swallow him up on the other side; but the control of events had slipped out of his grasp, and the only thing clear to him was that jump he must. His companion and he had crossed the park, and had reached a gate which separated it from the garden. He had stepped forward to let her through; but, instead of doing so, he wheeled round abruptly, and faced her.

"Margaret," he began, in an odd, hurried voice, "I have something to say to you, something that I have been wanting to say any time these ten years. Ah! it is more than that—it is a great deal more than ten years since I first loved you. I don't know whether this is any news to you; but you need not give me an answer now. You can think it over. You won't decide in a minute, when you remember that it is all my life, past and future, that is standing up for judgment. Oh, I don't expect you to be *in love* with me—an old fellow like me! I am not such an ass as that. And yet I am sure that I could make you happy. If I were not sure of that, I should never have dared to speak. I am asking you to give up a great deal; but wealth is not what you care for, and I have saved a little—we should not be what is called exactly poor. And something I can give you: I can give you a home, and rest from all the worries that have troubled you, and—and a heart—a heart which——"

He pulled up just in time to save himself from floundering into absolute bathos. Hugh had not the gift of unpremeditated eloquence.

He had at least declared himself in a manner which could not be misunderstood, and in the eagerness of the moment the fashion of his declaration seemed a matter of minor importance. It is not until darkness has fallen, and we have our pillow for our confidant, that we recall the idiotic speeches of the day with groanings that cannot be uttered. As for Colonel Kenyon, his part in this scene might have been more impressive, but would assuredly not have been more successful, if he had rehearsed it for weeks beforehand. His heart sank when he glanced at Margaret's face; for he read there not only astonishment and pain, but something more, which looked terribly like disgust.

"I never would have believed this of you," she said in a low voice. "Will you let me pass, please?"

Hugh started back, and threw open the gate. He had failed, and his failure did not surprise him; but he was not going to be spoken to as though he had done something to be ashamed of. Therefore he said, with a great show of determination, "You will give me an answer, Margaret. It shall be given when you please; but I have a right to an answer."

"There can only be one answer," she replied, without looking at him. "How could you think—but if you have not understood, there is no use in talking about it! Only I think *you*, at least, might have known that I am not the less Jack's wife because he is dead, and that to speak to me of—of—love is to insult both him and me."

"You don't mean that, Margaret; you must know that it is not so. A widow is not a wife, and there is no insult in an honest man's offer of his love and name."

"Coming from any one else, there might not be; but coming from you, there is."

"That is a very cruel and a very unjust thing to say," cried Hugh.

"I think it is you who are cruel," she returned.

They walked on for a few paces in silence, and then Margaret stopped short suddenly, and exclaimed, "Let us try to forget all this; let us never say another word about it as long as we live! I think I can see how it has happened. It was my fault, because I grumbled about being lonely, and about things going wrong. You thought there was only one way of escape for me, and you were ready to sacrifice yourself, as you always are. You did not understand; but I suppose men never do understand how women feel. All men forget after a time."

Hugh shook his head. "I at least am not a man who forgets easily. If you knew all, you would acknowledge that. I never loved, and never shall love, any woman but you. I loved you long before you ever saw poor Jack Stanniforth. I could not speak in those days, and afterwards I would not, because I feared to offend you. At the end of ten years I was surely entitled to open my lips. Is it because through all that long time I have done my utmost to serve you, and to behave towards you like a friend and nothing more, that you accuse me of insulting you when I confess the truth at last?"

"Oh, don't go on!" she exclaimed, holding up her hand with an imploring gesture; "you don't know how dreadfully it pains me to hear you talk like that. It seems as if—as if——"

"As if what?"

"As if it had been all a pretence—your friendship, I mean. Why did you not tell me of this long ago?"

"Would it have made any difference if I had?"

"It would have made this difference, that there would have been no deceit."

"I never was accused of being deceitful before in all my life," cried Hugh, with some warmth.

"I did not mean to accuse you of that," she answered, a little ashamed of herself. "I don't want to make any accusations, and I beg your pardon if I have hurt you by anything that I have said. The best thing that we can do is never to refer to the subject again. I am very, very sorry, Hugh," she added, holding out her hand to him; "but what you wish for is quite impossible."

He took her hand meekly enough. He felt that he was being very badly treated, that he was being forgiven without having sinned; but he was a man accustomed to be roughly used by Fortune, and at that particular moment he dreaded a permanent breach with Margaret as the worst disaster that could befall him.

"You are not angry?" he said humbly, and, it must be admitted, rather weakly.

"No," she answered slowly, "I am not angry; I have no right to be so. I am rather disappointed, that is all. Do what we will, things can never be quite the same again."

"I suppose not."

"Ah!" she said, pausing on the doorstep to deliver the last shot, after the manner of her sex, "we are like the purblind people in the parable; we have been so busy trying to remove the mote from Edith's eye that we never noticed the beam that was in our own."

Thinking over this not very apt illustration afterwards, Hugh was forced to the conclusion that the plural number had been made use of in it merely as a concession to politeness, and that it was not in Margaret's eye that the beam was supposed to exist.

Talk and Talkers.

(A SEQUEL.)

IN a former paper, with this heading, there was perhaps too much about mere debate ; and there was nothing said at all about that kind of talk which is merely luminous and restful, a higher power of silence, the quiet of the evening shared by ruminating friends. There is something, aside from personal preference, to be alleged in support of this omission. Those who are no chimney-cornerers, who rejoice in the social thunderstorm, have a ground in reason for their choice. They get little rest, indeed ; but restfulness is a quality for cattle ; the virtues are all active, life is alert, and it is in repose that men prepare themselves for evil. On the other hand, they are bruised into a knowledge of themselves and others ; they have in a high degree the fencer's pleasure in dexterity displayed and proved ; what they get, they get upon life's terms, paying for it as they go ; and once the talk is launched, they are assured of honest dealing from an adversary eager like themselves. The aboriginal man within us, the cave-dweller, still lusty as when he fought tooth and nail for roots and berries, scents this kind of equal battle from afar ; it is like his old primæval days upon the crags, a return to the sincerity of savage life from the comfortable fictions of the civilised. And if it be delightful to the old man, it is none the less profitable to his younger brother, the conscientious gentleman. I feel never quite sure of your urbane and smiling coteries ; I fear they indulge a man's vanities in silence, suffer him to encroach, encourage him on to be an ass, and send him forth again, not merely contemned for the moment, but radically more contemptible than when he entered. But if I have a flushed, blustering fellow for my opposite, bent on carrying a point, my vanity is sure to have its ears rubbed, once at least, in the course of the debate. He will not spare me when we differ ; he will not fear to demonstrate my folly to my face.

For many natures there is not much charm in the still, chambered society, the circle of bland countenances, the digestive silence, the admired remark, the flutter of affectionate approval. They demand more atmosphere and exercise ; "a gale upon their spirits," as our pious ancestors would phrase it ; to have their wits well breathed in an uproarious Valhalla. And I suspect that the choice, given their character and faults, is wise. By the laws of the game of talk, it was said, in a former paper, each accepts and fans the vanity of the other. But there is unhappily a counter-proposition which may be taken as an axiom : all human association is evil where the vanity is not repeatedly checked.

The problem in this, as in all other questions, is to reconcile two irreconcilables. Now, the purely wise are silenced by facts; they talk in a clear atmosphere, problems lying around them like a view in nature; if they can be shown to be somewhat in the wrong, they digest the reproof like a thrashing, and make better intellectual blood. They stand corrected by a whisper; a word or a glance reminds them of the great eternal law. But it is not so with all. Others in conversation seek rather contact with their fellow-men than increase of knowledge or clarity of thought. The drama, not the philosophy, of life is the sphere of their intellectual activity. Even when they pursue truth, they desire as much as possible of what we may call human scenery along the road they follow. They dwell in the heart of life; the blood sounding in their ears, their eyes laying hold of what delights them with a brutal avidity that makes them blind to all besides, their interest rivetted on people, living, loving, talking, tangible people. To a man of this description, the sphere of argument seems very pale and ghostly. By a strong expression, a perturbed countenance, floods of tears, an insult which his conscience obliges him to swallow, he is brought round to knowledge which no syllogism would have conveyed to him. His own experience is so vivid, he is so superlatively conscious of himself, that if, day after day, he is allowed to hector and hear nothing but approving echoes, he will lose his hold on the sobriety of things and take himself in earnest for a god. Talk might be to such an one the very way of moral ruin; the school where he might learn to be at once intolerable and ridiculous. This were to eat of the tree of knowledge, and not add that apple of death, which must complete and humble us.

This character, which is perhaps commoner than philosophers suppose, exists to a different degree in different persons. Some are merely bored by the abstract; to others it is sheerly insignificant. And to both the personal is a necessary element. They read, as they talk, not for glimpses of truth, but for that touch of nature which convinces us of kinship with another. They do not judge; they recognise affinities. What is unwelcome, they combat; from what is antipathetic, they avert their hearing. For these men to learn much by conversation, they must speak with their superiors, not in intellect, for that is a superiority that must be proved, but in station. If they cannot find a friend to bully them for their good, they must find either an old man, a woman, or some one so far below them in the artificial order of society, that courtesy may be particularly exercised.

The best teachers are the aged. To the old our mouths are always partly closed; we must swallow our obvious retorts and listen. They sit above our heads, on life's raised daïs, and appeal at once to our respect and pity. A flavour of the old school, a touch of something different in their manner—which is freer and rounder, if they come of what is called a good family, and often more timid and precise if they are of the middle class—serves, in these days, to accentuate the differ-

ence of age and add a distinction to grey hairs. But their superiority is founded more deeply than by outward marks or gestures. They are before us in the march of man; they have more or less solved the irking problem; they have battled through the equinox of life; in good and evil they have held their course; and now, without open shame, they near the crown and harbour. It may be we have been struck with one of fortune's darts; we can scarce be civil, so cruelly is our spirit tossed. Yet long before we were so much as thought upon, the like calamity befell the old man or woman that now, with pleasant humour, rallies us upon our inattention, sitting composed in the holy evening of man's life, in the clear shining after rain. We grow ashamed of our distresses, new and hot and coarse, like villanous roadside brandy; we see life in aerial perspective, under the heavens of faith; and out of the worst, at the mere presence of contented age, look forward and take patience. Fear shrinks before them "like a thing reproved," not the flitting and ineffectual fear of death, but the instant, dwelling terror of the responsibilities and revenges of life. Their speech, indeed, is timid; they report lions in the path; they counsel a meticulous footing; but their serene, marred faces are more eloquent and tell another story. Where they have gone, we will go also, not very greatly fearing; what they have endured unbroken, we also, God helping us, will make a shift to bear.

There is to-day in England a school of women novelists whose particular note it is to jeer at age. I am often at a loss to know what people mean when they call books immoral; in the case of these ladies it is a phrase that I can understand, and that I hasten to subscribe. The gentlemen of M. Octave Feuillet, and the young ladies of our lady novelists may be pilloried together as the last word of radical and vulgar heartlessness. But from the popularity of this kind of literature, we should argue rather the inattention than the complicity of the reader; and the same persons who innocently while away their leisure with these despicable books may still rejoice in the notice and be bettered by the lessons of their elders. For not only is the presence of the aged in itself remedial, but their minds are stored with antidotes, wisdom's simples, plain considerations overlooked by youth. They have matter to communicate, be they never so stupid. Their talk is not merely literature, it is great literature; classic in virtue of the speaker's detachment, studded, like a book of travel, with things we should not otherwise have learnt. In virtue, I have said, of the speaker's detachment—and this is why, of two old men, the one who is not your father speaks to you with the more sensible authority; for in the paternal relation the oldest have lively interests and remain still young. Thus, I have known two young men, great friends; each swore by the other's father; the father of each swore by the other lad; and yet each pair of parent and child were perpetually by the ears. This is typical; it reads like the germ of some kindly comedy.

The old appear in conversation in two characters: the critically silent

and the garrulous anecdotic. The last is perhaps what we look for ; it is perhaps the more instructive. An old gentleman, well on in years, sits handsomely and naturally in the bow-window of his age, scanning experience with reverted eye ; and chirping and smiling, communicates the accidents and reads the lesson of his long career. Opinions are strengthened, indeed, but they are also weeded out, in the course of years. What remains steadily present to the eye of the retired veteran in his hermitage, what still ministers to his content, what still quickens his old honest heart—these are “ the real long-lived things ” that Whitman tells us to prefer. Where youth agrees with age, not where they differ, wisdom lies ; and it is when the young disciple finds his heart to beat in tune with his grey-bearded teacher’s that a lesson may be learned. I have known one old gentleman, whom I may name, for he is now gathered to his stock—Robert Hunter, Sheriff of Dumbarton, and author of an excellent law-book still re-edited and re-published. Whether he was originally big or little, is more than I can guess. When I knew him, he was all fallen away and fallen in ; crooked and shrunken ; buckled into a stiff waistcoat for support ; troubled by ailments, which kept him hobbling in and out of the room ; one foot gouty ; a wig, for decency, not for deception, on his head ; close shaved, except under his chin—and for that he never failed to apologise, for it went sore against the traditions of his life. You can imagine how he would fare in a novel by Miss Mather ; yet this rag of a Chelsea veteran lived to his last year in the plenitude of all that is best in man, brimming with human kindness, and staunch as a Roman soldier under his manifold infirmities. You could not say that he had lost his memory, for he would repeat Shakespeare and Webster and Jeremy Taylor and Burke by the page together ; but the parchment was filled up, there was no room for fresh inscriptions, and he was capable of repeating the same anecdote on many successive visits. His voice survived in its full power, and he took a pride in using it. On his last voyage as Commissioner of Lighthouses, he hailed a ship at sea and made himself clearly audible without a speaking trumpet, ruffling the while with a proper vanity in his achievement. He had a habit of eking out his words with interrogative hems, which was puzzling and a little wearisome, suited ill with his appearance, and seemed a survival from some former stage of bodily portliness. Of yore, when he was a great pedestrian and no enemy to good claret, he may have pointed with these minute guns his allocutions to the bench. His humour was perfectly equable, set beyond the reach of fate ; gout, rheumatism, stone and gravel might have combined their forces against that frail tabernacle, but when I came round on Sunday evening, he would lay aside Jeremy Taylor’s *Life of Christ* and greet me with the same open brow, the same kind formality of manner. His opinions and sympathies dated the man almost to a decade. He had begun life, under his mother’s influence, as an admirer of Junius, but on maturer knowledge had transferred his admiration to Burke. He cautioned me, with entire

gravity, to be punctilious in writing English ; never to forget that I was a Scotchman, that English was a foreign tongue, and that if I attempted the colloquial, I should certainly be shamed : the remark was apposite, I suppose, in the days of David Hume. Scott was too new for him ; he had known the author—known him, too, for a Tory ; and to the genuine classic, a contemporary is always something of a trouble. He had the old, serious love of the play ; had even, as he was proud to tell, played a certain part in the history of Shakespearian revivals ; for he had successfully pressed on Murray, of the old Edinburgh Theatre, the idea of producing Shakespeare's fairy pieces with great scenic display. A moderate in religion, he was much struck in the last years of his life by a conversation with two young lads, revivalists. "H'm," he would say—"new to me. I have had—h'm—no such experience." It struck him, not with pain, rather with a solemn philosophic interest, that he, a Christian as he hoped, and a Christian of so old a standing, should hear these young fellows talking of his own subject, his own weapons that he had fought the battle of life with,—“and—h'm—not understand.” In this wise and graceful attitude, he did justice to himself and others, reposed unshaken in his old beliefs, and recognised their limits without anger or alarm. His last recorded remark, on the last night of his life, was after he had been arguing against Calvinism with his minister, and was interrupted by an intolerable pang. “After all,” he said, “of all the 'isms, I know none so bad as rheumatism.” My own last sight of him was some time before, when we dined together at an inn ; he had been on circuit, for he stuck to his duties like a chief part of his existence ; and I remember it as the only occasion on which he ever soiled his lips with slang—a thing he loathed. We were both Roberts ; and as we took our places at table, he addressed me with a twinkle : “We are just what you would call two bob.” He offered me port, I remember, as the proper milk of youth ; spoke of “twenty-shilling notes ;” and, throughout the meal, was full of old-world pleasantry and quaintness, like an ancient boy on a holiday. But what I recall chiefly was his confession that he had never read “Othello” to an end. Shakespeare was his continual study. He loved nothing better than to display his knowledge and memory by adducing parallel passages from Shakespeare, passages where the same word was employed, or the same idea differently treated. But “Othello” had beaten him. “That noble gentleman and that noble lady—h'm—too painful for me.” The same night, the hoardings were covered with posters, “Burlesque of Othello,” and the contrast blazed up in my mind like a bonfire. An unforgettable look it gave me into that kind man's soul. His acquaintance was indeed a liberal and pious education. All the humanities were taught in that bare dining-room beside his gouty footstool. He was a piece of good advice ; he was himself the instance that pointed and adorned his various talk. Nor could a young man have found elsewhere a place so set apart from envy, fear, discontent, or any of the passions that debase ; a life so honest and composed ; a soul, like an

ancient violin, so subdued to harmony, responding to a touch in music—as in that dining-room, with Mr. Hunter chatting at the eleventh hour, under the shadow of eternity, fearless and gentle.

The second class of old people are not anecdotic; they are rather hearers than talkers, listening to the young with an amused and critical attention. To have this sort of intercourse to perfection, I think we must go to old ladies. Women are better hearers than men, to begin with; they learn, I fear in anguish, to bear with the tedious and infantile vanity of the other sex; and we will take more from a woman than even from the oldest man in the way of biting comment. Biting comment is the chief part, whether for profit or amusement, in this business. If the old lady that I have in my eye is a very caustic speaker, her tongue, after years of practice, in absolute command whether for silence or attack. If she chance to dislike you, you will be tempted to curse the malignity of age. But if you chance to please even slightly, you will be listened to with a particular laughing grace of sympathy, and from time to time chastised, as if in play, with a parasol as heavy as a pole-axe. It requires a singular art, as well as the vantage-ground of age, to deal these stunning corrections among the coxcombs of the young. The pill is disguised in sugar of wit; it is administered as a compliment—if you had not pleased, you would not have been censured; it is a personal affair—a hyphen—a *trait d'union*, between you and your censor; age's philandering, for her pleasure and your good. Incontestably the young man feels very much of a fool; but he must be a perfect Malvolio, sick with self-love, if he cannot take an open buffet and still smile. The correction of silence is what kills; when you know you have transgressed, and your friend says nothing and avoids your eye. If a man were made of gutta-percha, his heart would quail at such a moment. But when the word is out, the worst is over; and a fellow with any good-humour at all may pass through a perfect hail of witty criticism, every bare place on his soul hit to the quick with a shrewd missile, and reappear, as if after a dive, tingling with a fine moral reaction—and ready, with a shrinking readiness, one-third loath, for a repetition of the discipline.

There are few women, not well sunned and ripened, and perhaps toughened, who can thus stand apart from a man and say the true thing with a kind of genial cruelty. Still there are some—and I doubt if there be any man who can return the compliment. The class of man represented by Vernon Whitford in the "Egoist" says, indeed, the true thing, but he says it stockishly. Vernon is a noble fellow, and makes, by the way, a noble and instructive contrast to Daniel Deronda; his conduct is the conduct of a man of honour; but we agree with him, against our consciences, when he remorsefully considers "its astonishing dryness." He is the best of men, but the best of women manage to combine all that and something more. Their very faults assist them; they are helped even by the falseness of their position in life. They can

retire into the fortified camp of the proprieties. They can touch a subject, and suppress it. The most adroit employ a somewhat elaborate reserve as a means to be frank, much as they wear gloves when they shake hands. But a man has the full responsibility of his freedom, cannot evade a question, can scarce be silent without rudeness, must answer for his words upon the moment, and is not seldom left face to face with a damning choice, between the more or less dishonourable wriggling of Deronda and the downright woodenness of Vernon Whitford.

To two classes we pay court: women and the aged. But the superiority of women is perpetually menaced; they do not sit throned on infirmities like the old; they are suitors as well as sovereigns; their vanity is engaged, their affections are too apt to follow; and hence much of the talk between the sexes degenerates into something unworthy of the name. The desire to please, to shine with a particular engaging lustre, to draw a fascinating picture of oneself, banishes from conversation all that is sterling and most of what is humorous. As soon as a strong current of mutual admiration begins to flow, the human interest triumphs entirely over the intellectual, and the commerce of words, consciously or not, becomes secondary to the commercing of eyes. Each simply waits upon the other to be admired, and the talk dwindles into platitudinous piping. Coquetry and fatuity are thus the knell of talk. But even where this ridiculous danger is avoided, and a man and woman converse equally and honestly, something in their nature or their education falsifies the strain. An instinct prompts them to agree; and where that is impossible, to agree to differ. Should they neglect the warning, at the first suspicion of an argument, they find themselves in different hemispheres. About any point of business or conduct, any actual affair demanding settlement, a woman will speak and listen, hear and answer arguments, not only with natural wisdom, but with candour and logical honesty. But if the subject of debate be something in the air, an abstraction, an excuse for talk, a logical Aunt Sally, then may the male debater instantly abandon hope; he may employ reason, adduce facts, be supple, be smiling, be angry, all shall avail him nothing; what the woman said first, that (unless she has forgotten it) she will repeat at the end. Hence, at the very junctures when a talk between men grows brighter and quicker and begins to promise to bear fruit, talk between the sexes is menaced with dissolution. The point of difference, the point of interest, is evaded by the brilliant woman, under a shower of irrelevant conversational rockets; it is bridged by the discreet woman with a rustle of silk, as she passes smoothly forward to the nearest point of safety. It cannot be discussed, or not in its natural connection. It may be returned upon after a circuit; and if propounded as a problem, with neither party committed to a side, it may then be gently, lightly, but, in the end, thoroughly treated. This sort of prestidigitation, juggling the dangerous topic out of sight until it can be

reintroduced with safety in an altered shape, is a piece of tactics among the true drawing-room queens.

The drawing-room is, indeed, an artificial place ; it is so by our choice and for our sins ; the subjection of women, the ideal imposed upon them from the cradle and worn, like a hair-shirt, with so much constancy, their motherly, superior tenderness to man's vanity and self-importance, their managing arts—the arts of a civilised slave among good-natured barbarians—are all painful ingredients, and all help to falsify relations. It is not till we get clear of that amusing, artificial scene that genuine relations are founded, or ideas honestly compared. In the garden, on the road or the hillside, or *tête-à-tête* and apart from interruptions, occasions arise when we may learn much from any single woman ; and nowhere more often than in married life. Marriage is one long conversation, chequered by disputes. The disputes are simply valueless ; they but ingrain the difference ; the heroic heart of woman prompts her at once to nail her colours to the mast. But in the intervals, almost unconsciously, with no desire to shine, the whole material of life is turned over and over, ideas are struck out and shared, the two persons more and more adapt their notions one to suit the other, and in process of time, without sound of trumpet, they conduct each other into new worlds of thought.

R. L. S.

Botticelli at the Villa Lemmi.

A WOODEN frame thick overlaid with paste of sulphur applied to the face of the frescoes; the bricks deftly cut into, sawed, picked away from behind; the sulphur paste frame with adhering painted plaster pulled away from the broken, picked, jagged old wall; a second framework covered with wet gypsum applied to the back of each thin sheet of frescoed plaster; sulphur paste delicately peeled off the painted surface of the plaster, the back of which remains adhering to, encased in, the gypsum; that is the operation. A new back has been substituted for the old wall; and the frescoes are intact, unspotted, safe, framed, portable, ready for the wooden cases of the packers, the seals of the officials, the van of the railway, the criticism of the experts, the gape of the public. Civilisation has driven before it even dead art, even art faded to a ghost; and the pictures which some four hundred years ago Alessandro Botticelli painted in one of the back rooms of the little villafarm outside Florence, are now upon the wall of the grand staircase of the Louvre. This is what they have just done, and this is what gives me annoyance. Now, I sincerely think that I am quite without any morbid æsthetic aversion against modern times and modern arrangements: I often feel how much nobler in many ways of generous thought and endeavour, which we sniff at because it has become commonplace, is this prosaic age of ours than many another with which we associate ideas of romance; I sometimes even feel a doubt whether in several branches of art itself, in its most delicate branch of poetry, these modern times have not given and are not giving work more completely beautiful than the work of times with more pretensions to poetry and picturesqueness. I cannot therefore suspect myself of morbid aversion to modern things and actions. Yet this particular modern action of removing the frescoes from the Villa Lemmi leaves in me a strong, though at first somewhat inarticulate, sense of dissatisfaction. It may be right, this instinctive and vague feeling of displeasure, or it may be wrong, but any way there it is; and my present object is exactly to discover whether this is a selfish and sentimental personal crotchet, or a well-founded and honest conviction. This is what I wish to do; and in order to do it, let me separate from one another the various impressions from the past, the various expectations of the future; let me place in some sort of intelligible order the fragments of scarce conscious argument, which taken together make up or produce the vaguely painful sense which comes over me every time that I remember the removal of those paintings from that place.

The first question which in this ransacking of my consciousness I hit upon is one in which the explanation of the whole matter may possibly lie. The question is simply whether the removal of those paintings from one locality to another deprives me, in the same manner as would the departure of a friend to some other country, of a particular kind of pleasure which, as an analogous kind of pleasure might be obtained only from the presence of the individual friend who has gone away, might depend for me upon the presence of these individual frescoes. This seems a likely enough explanation, but I do not think it is in any way the true one. There are, indeed, there must be to every one, a certain small number of works of art which are very much what to each of us is a certain small, very small number of friends; certain books or passages in books, certain pictures or statues, certain pieces of music, never again to be able to read which, to see again or hear once more, would be at the moment of first knowing that these things must be, a sharp pain, and with the passing of time, a sort of vague and dull nostalgia, coming ever and anon in moments of weakness and depression, like the hopeless longing for a face we can see only through a shifting mist of years, for a voice whose tone we can evoke for only one scarcely perceptible instant. Such works of art there must be for all to whom art is anything, although there can be but few from which we can thus be wholly and utterly separated; since a poem, a picture, a piece of music, are things whose identity can be almost indefinitely multiplied, not things, like friends, which live but once and only in one place. But among such things for me are not those frescoes, nay, not any work of Botticelli. There are personal sympathies in art as in all things, harmonies more or less complete between certain works and certain minds; and Botticelli is to me one of those incompleter harmonies. Not but that I appreciate him: that I could, I think, weigh his merits fairly enough if fairness of judgment were the question, and not personal sympathy. I know him well, familiarly; but he is as one of those persons whom you are for ever meeting without ever especially seeking, familiar from sheer habit, perhaps justly enough appreciated for what they are; one of those people who never give you the satisfaction either of thoroughly liking or thoroughly disliking them, and who at the same time will not permit you to grow indifferent: suddenly charming you, when you are ill-disposed to them, with a look, a turn of the head, an intonation of the voice, and the next time as suddenly leaving you dissatisfied, rubbing you the wrong way; till the perpetual alternation of liking and not liking, of agreeable surprise and disheartening disappointment grows monotonous, is foreseen, and yet even then the satisfaction of utter indifference is still maliciously withheld, for every now and then there unexpectedly gleams out that look, there vibrates that intonation which charms you, which annoys you, which drags you back again into the routine of surprised pleasure, disappointment, monotony, wearying, and yet too soon interrupted to become

indifferent. This is how the matter stands between me and Botticelli; he is more sympathetic and less unsympathetic to me by far than certain of his fellow-workers, but with them I know exactly how much I shall like, how much I shall dislike; and with him, never. No, not even in the same painting; I am made capricious by his capriciousness; I am never in tune, always too high or too low for him. I always catch myself thinking of this, that, or the other of his works; nay, of the abstract entirety of them all, differently from how I felt when last time I actually was in their presence, from how I shall feel when I actually am in their presence. Oh the woebegone Madonnas, lanky yet flaccid beneath their bunched-up draperies, all tied in the wrong places, nay, rather strangely ligatured with coloured tapes into strange puffs and strange waists; Madonnas drooping like overblown lilies, yet pinched like frostbitten rosebuds, creatures neither old nor young, with hollow cheeks and baby lips, not consumed by the burning soul within like Perugino's hectic saints, but sallow, languid, life-weary with the fever which haunts the shallow lakes, the pasture-tracts of Southern Tuscany; seated with faces dreary, wistful, peevish, gentle, you know not which, before their bushes of dark-red roses, surrounded by their living hedges of seraph children, with faces sweet yet cross like their own—faces too large, too small, which?—with massive jaws of obstinacy and vague eyes of dreaminess. Madonnas who half drop their babes in sudden sickening faintness, Christ children too captious and peevish even to cry; poor puzzled, half-pained, half-ravished angels; draperies clinging and flying about in all directions; arms twining, fingers twitching in inextricable knots; world of dissatisfied sentiment, of unpalatable sweetness, of vacant suggestion, of uncomfortable gracefulness, of ill-tempered graciousness, world of aborted beauty and aborted delightfulness, created, with infinite strain and discouragement, by the Florentine silversmith painter, hankering vainly after the perfect elegance and graciousness, the diaphanous sentiment of Umbria, and trying to turn the stiff necks and bend the stolid heads of the strong and ugly models of Filippino, Verrocchio, and Ghirlandajo; to twine and knot the scarves and draperies on their thick-set bodies, to make solitary and contemplative passion burn in their matter-of-fact and humorous faces, as all such things could be only in the delicate, exquisite, morbid Umbrian boys and women of Perugino. No, this world, thus wearisomely elaborated by Sandro Botticelli, has no attraction for me; it is all bitter, insipid, like certain herbs and the juice pressed out of them; I fail to see the charm, I recognise the repulsion. And yet, even as I write, there crowds into my mind a certain swarm of angels, of eager, earnest, pale young faces, with wavy hair streaked with gold threads, and sweet lips, of which you feel that through them pass clear and fresh choristers' voices, voices which are so vocal, so unlike pipe, or reed, or string, and yet which have in their sweetness a something of the bleating of young sheep, making them but the sweeter; there come before me certain

slim, erect, quaint, stag-like figures, all draped in tissues embroidered with roses, and corn, and gilliflowers, and others with delicate wreathed tresses drooping on to delicate and infinitely crinkled, half transparent white veils, and certain others yet, with slim and delicate arms, curved-in waists, and slender legs and feet, themselves wreathed, entwined, swaying like some twisted sprays of wind-flowers round some tall and bending wind-shaken reed: with the recollection of them comes a sense of spring, of trees still yellow with first beginnings of leaf, of meadows with the first faint dyes of their later dark-yellow and indigo patterings, of fields green with corn, and grey with still dry branches, of warm sun and cold air, and the sweet unripeness of the early year; and amidst all this, emerging from this vague tangle of impressions, a strange face, an erect long neck, with strange straight joining eyebrows, and thin curled lips, defiant, laughing, fascinating, capricious, capriciousness concentrated, impersonate; the capriciousness of the art, of the man, of myself, the capriciousness which will, if I leave these phantoms and go once more to the reality of Botticelli's works, make me meet again only slim and flaccid Madonnas, sickly, puling children, and angels all peevishness and airs and graces.

Such are my individual feelings towards Botticelli's art, and this incompleteness of sympathy between the great Florentine who tried to be an Umbrian and myself—or, if you prefer, my misappreciation of the peculiar exquisiteness and fascination of his work—must make it clear that my sense of dissatisfaction at the removal of his two frescoes from the Villa Lemmi cannot be due to the fact that in losing them I am being deprived of something analogous to the power of seeing and talking with a very dear friend. Moreover, this Florence in which I live is full of Botticelli's works, good and bad; and among those remaining are paintings of his superior to the frescoes of the Villa Lemmi, and more distinctly attractive to me than they are. So that there can be on my part no sense of deprivation connected with those two particular frescoes. And furthermore, I must make a confession which will help to clear away any erroneous explanations which may still be in the way of the correct one; and that confession is, that less than two months hence I shall be in Paris, in the Louvre, with every opportunity of seeing those two Botticellis again; and that together with the knowledge of this I have the knowledge of the fact that being there, in Paris, in the Louvre, I shall feel no particular craving to look upon those two frescoes again. Nay, I even foresee a certain avoidance of them; a something more than indifference to their being near at hand, within sight; an almost repugnance to see them in their new place. So that I am obliged to come round again, and seek my explanation elsewhere. Looking again in my consciousness, the next thing I find is a very strong impression of the time when I saw those frescoes first, of the succeeding visits to them, or rather a vivid group of impressions which used to be connected in my mind with the few words—"the Botticellis at the Villa Lemmi." And

as but very few people who lived in Florence or came hither even knew of the existence of these frescoes, discovered not ten years ago, and still unnoticed by the guide-book makers—and you may happen not to be among that small number—and as, moreover, it is now a matter of the past; I think I had better, in order to understand myself and be understood, try and give you an idea of the Villa Lemmi and the going there. You followed, for some twenty minutes, the road towards Sesto Fiorentino, the castle of Quarto and the other places which lie at the foot of Monte Morello, whose bleak flanks, shadowing the passing clouds, are patterned grey on grey, like some huge folds of greyish watered silk; then you turned off by another high road towards the old Medicean villa of Careggi, where Lorenzo died, whose castle-like machicolations and overhanging roof are just visible among the trees, while behind rise the little slopes of Careggi, grey with olive at the base, dark green and feathery with pine woods at the top, and all dotted with white farms and villas; thus past one or two villa gates, and then you left the high road suddenly for a little rough short cut, with white walls, rudely patterned and overtopped by the whitish olive branches, on either side; in front rose, against a screen of dark cypress plumes, a little old white house, with heavily grated windows and a belvedere tower, opened out into a delicate pillared loggia, whence the pigeons swooped in flocks into the adjacent fields. That was Villa Lemmi. But you passed the old doorway, surmounted by the stone escutcheon of Albizi or Tornabuoni, I know not which, and knocked at a wooden door, which being opened, a peasant woman or a little bare-legged brat led you into a kind of farm-yard. Past the big mulberry-tree just yellowing into leaf, and the rose and currant bushes; under the stable archway, by the side of the dark cowshed, whence came lowing sounds and scent of hay and dairy; through a yard where the lemon-trees stood in big earthen jars, and the linen hung over the grass on the drying lines; and thence into the cool, dark, cloistered court of the villa—a court whose brick pavement was patterned with yellow and greenish lichen, and in which one's steps sounded drearily; but where the farm maid was drawing water out of the well in the centre, and the farm children were swinging on ropes from the pillars, making the arches resound with laughter and screams. On the first floor a narrow parapeted balcony ran round one side of this court, and along this you followed the peasant woman clattering in her wooden clogs, with two or three little brown boys and girls, with broad little faces running into a sudden point, and hair cropped or tightly tied in a top-knot, like the children who sing and play, kick their legs and entwine their arms in Luca della Robbia's choir parapet high-reliefs. Then up a sudden step, a narrow door unlocked, and you entered a small, low room, the former scullery of the villa, where, about ten years ago, some kitchen-maid scraping at the wall with her knife laid bare a sudden patch of paint, a shot purple and red bit of drapery, a gold-streaked lock of hair; till, scraping well and ill, they scraped into exist-

tence two unguessed frescoes, and out of existence perhaps two for ever lost ones. Of the two frescoes, now in a very different place, the one shows four young women, advancing in hesitating and faltering procession, long, slender, with doubled-girdled, puffing garments, green and mauve and white; and sweet, soft wistful young heads, vacillating, pouting red lips, and vague, shy grey eyes and loosened light hair, giving I know not what, perhaps some effaced flower, dropping it, with dainty, supple-wristed hands, into a folded cloth held by one dressed in the straight, stiff, foldless russet skirt of a Florentine matron; to the back a half rubbed out portico, a many jetted fountain; and to the side a little curly brown boy with iridescent wings holding an obliterated escutcheon; the whole closed in by a group of pointed pillarets half covered with plaster. The second fresco represents a company of damsels, in richly-hued antique garb, seated in a circle in a laurel grove; their garments once delicately embroidered with threads of gilding. One holds a globe; another, large featured like a statue and of bronzed complexion, rests an architect's square upon her shoulder; below reclines another with a hand organ and a tambourine; on a raised throne in the middle sits a half veiled lady holding a bow. Towards her, into this goodly company of sciences and arts, a nymph, a muse, with loosened yellow hair and wistful pointed face, is leading the young Giovanni Pico della Mirandola, stately yet timid; a noble and charming figure in scholar's gown of blue and purple shot silk, his fair long hair combed neatly from under a scarlet cap; a sweet and thoughtful face, thin and pale, with high arched nose and pale eyes, under much-curved, fanciful brows; a something between the scholar, the saint, and the page in his demure boyish elegance; a thing of Courts as well as of the study.

These were the frescoes. One looked at them; then, between thus doing, looked also out of the little window, over the shimmering olives, the bright green corn, to where the pines and cypresses of the hillside detached their featheriness against the sky, and the white houses and tower of Fiesole, and its tiers and tiers of villas, rose high in the distance. And then, when one had given the last glance to the frescoes, and the woman had locked the door behind, one descended into the garden, or farmland; where, against the walls of the old villa, under its bowed-out window gratings, were spaliered any amount of the delicate May roses, of intensest pink, and a scent which made one think of the East, of the rose-gardens of Pæstum, of the paladin Orlando filling his helmet with crushed rose-leaves lest he might hear and be seduced by the song of the birds in the garden of the enchantress Falerina, where the Lamia wound her green coils through the grass, under the orchard trees, and the sirens sat and wove garlands in the clear blue depths of the lake.

Among the confused general impression left by many a visit to the frescoes and the garden, there remains distinct the remembrance of one particular late afternoon of spring at the Villa Lemmi. Going away from seeing the frescoes, we stepped on to the rusty old twisted iron

balcony, and looked out on to the green country, dripping and misty with the afternoon's rain. A large cherry-tree, its white blossom thinned by budding leaves, was immediately below the balcony; then an expanse of fresh, bright green corn, beaten down by the rain, broken by the pale, scarce budding mulberry-trees, and dotted with farms and villas, undulating away upwards into the olive and cypress covered hills of Careggi; away, paler bluish, greener, and bounded like a lake by the blue slopes of Signa, with here and there a screen of poplars, an isolated black cypress, or a projecting square belfry, the sky and sunset gleaming through its pillars. The sun was setting; emerging, round, immense, rayless, golden, from beneath a bank of vapours, which gradually rolled aside; descending, yellow among livid cloud and blue cold sky, until it disappeared behind the grey hills simulating a bank of clouds, or the clouds piled up in semblance of a ridge of hills, I know not which, down the Arno; leaving, as soon as it had disappeared, a bright speck, a spark, a glowing ember, on the top of the cloud hill, which grew and sent forth red feathery vapours of flame, turning the light grey cloud which hung above it, clear on the pale blue sky, into the flamelit cloud of smoke hanging over a volcano; filaments of red flame combed like hair at the narrow base, solid masses of turbid smoke-like vapour above. The ember left by the sun glowing redder and redder; and sending, slowly and gradually, long yellow rays across the western sky; the glow dying gradually away; the white mists wrapping the foot of the Apennine; the volcano red leaving slowly the cloud hills blue and cold; only the lower edge of a grey cloud, wet and distinct above the high blue sky, still reddened and gilded by the departed blaze. A great greyness and dampness and stillness coming over everything at last, till the sky remained white and livid, resting on shoals of heavy vapours. Even thus, four hundred years ago, Botticelli may also have watched the sun set as he left his work in the little quiet farm villa, before hurrying back to the city, or sauntering across the fields to the castellated Careggi yonder, where the Magnificent Lorenzo supped and discussed Plato and improvised verses about falcon hunts, comic paladins, or antique nymphs with Pico and Pulci and Politian.

This sort of impressions used to hang to the words, "the Villa Lemmi Botticellis"; words which have now become meaningless, a mere momentary label, no better than a mere number, for the two frescoes just set up in the Louvre. And it is, I think, this change, this loss, which I vaguely resent every time I think of the removal of the frescoes. Not merely for myself, since after all I have enjoyed, possessed the past, am by so much richer than my neighbours; not even merely for those come too late, to whom the Villa Lemmi will be unknown and the frescoes no better than any other paintings in the huge gallery; since for such persons will still remain other places, if not as perfect as the Villa Lemmi, yet akin to it: convents high among the barren grey hills overlooking the Sienese Maremma, where Signorelli and Sodoma painted

while the wind moaned, as it moans now, through the thick cypresses and the pines which fill the ravine below Monte Oliveto; quiet little *scuole* of Venice, where you seek after the long row through the tortuous canals, after the sad green and grey and brown streakings of wall and water, the purple robes and gold-woven linen, the bronzed faces and auburn heads of the altar-pieces of Carpaccio and Bellini; secluded corners of Norman and Breton towns, where the cathedral stands, with delicate thistles and dog-rose and hawthorn carved in its crumbling grey stone, and plants as delicate as they, stone pinks and long-seeded grasses grow in the crannies of its buttresses and belfry, round which circle the rooks, the cornfields and apple-orchards as near by as the black carved and colonnaded houses of the town; places where art still keeps its old, familiar, original framework of reality, of nature, of human life. The dissatisfaction with which I am filled is the dissatisfaction at no one particular loss, but at a whole tendency whose result is loss, which consists in wantonly ridding ourselves of our most precious artistic possessions; and of which this episode of the removal of the Villa Lemmi frescoes is but one instance among many.

I have said that this modern tendency deprives us of our most valuable artistic possessions; and this will doubtless seem rather an insane speech. For what is the aim of all modern efforts (however bungling, perhaps, in single instances), if not to save from destruction and to render accessible as great as possible a proportion of the works which former artistic times have bequeathed to us? Towards this purpose every cultured nation spends much of its time and money and brains; galleries are being built on all sides, statues are being dug for wherever any are buried, pictures are being bought up whenever there are any for sale; Vandalism in the shape of defacing restoration or absolute destruction is being watched for and pounced upon in every place where it may be suspected; the whole world is busy in trying to save whatever artistic things have been left us by more productive, but also much more destructive times.

So much for the mere physical, economic, practical side of the matter. But corresponding with it is a quite extraordinary intellectual side: an activity, unknown before our days, in teaching people to understand the spirit in which all these different works of art have been produced, the historical conditions by which they have been affected, the whole genealogy and rules of precedence of schools and artists: art is not only physically, but intellectually housed, it is as safe from the imbecile misinterpretation of former times as it is from the bullets of former generations of soldiers, the stones of former generations of street-boys, the smoke of long snuffed out altar candles. All this is evident, palpable, irrefutable, and all this means that mankind is growing daily more anxious to preserve its artistic properties. Evident, palpable, irrefutable; far be it from me to attempt to disprove it. But there is an artistic possession more valuable than any picture, statue, cathedral, symphony, or poem whatsoever—indeed, the most precious artistic pro-

erty that we possess. It is the power, the means, the facility due to the condition both of our minds and of works of art—of assimilating art into life. Such assimilation means not only the enjoyment at the actual moment of seeing picture or statue, of hearing poem or symphony, but also (what is of more importance), the wealth of garnered-up impression which remains to us when the picture or statue has been long out of sight, the words of the poem have long been forgotten, the chords of the symphony have for years ceased to vibrate. For in the life of each of us there is, or might be, a sort of unseen treasury of beautiful things; we have the power if we choose of carrying with us many a precious immaterial thing, many a tapestry wrought by ourselves out of the threads, imperishably tinted, taken from poem or picture, with which we may deck ourselves when fate leads us into mere whitewashed mental lodgings, or squalid moral gaols; many a beautiful nick-nack of thought or feeling, or fragmentary form, which remain to us when we are beggared of all else; and again, many a thing which will enhance the already excellent, things which will be as unseen lutes or viols with which to make music through the silent spring evening meadows, the silent autumn woods. A great stock of wealth, all contained in a tiny, nay, invisible thing, much more valuable than any purse of old Fortunatus: a stock also, and mind this, of real wealth, not of the mere delusions with which in our weakness we try sometimes to sweeten our life, the dreams of passion and worship, to enjoy which we must waste our precious time in sleep, merely to wake up poorer and sadder than before. This we have, or might have; and to obtain it we require not merely to enjoy art superficially, momentarily, but to assimilate it into our nature, to make its impressions our own. But this possibility of assimilation of art into life cannot be obtained by the mere wishing; it depends upon conditions which we can produce, and which we can also, and frequently do, prevent. As recognition means previous knowledge, so does assimilation mean a certain homogeneity between that which absorbs and that which is absorbed; and this seems to be the case far more in intellectual and moral matters than in mere physical ones. Completely new impressions are not perceived, since the very organs of perception are formed by the repetition of a but slightly varying act of perceiving; the harmonic combinations which seem most obvious to our ears would probably have left but a completely muddled impression on even the most musical of the men of antiquity. Hence it is that if artistic impressions are to be assimilated into our life, there must already exist in our life a habit of impression akin to those given wholesale by art; and also that there must be in the manner in which artistic impressions are presented to us something familiar, something analogous to the manner in which we obtain the ordinary inartistic impressions of life. There must, for such assimilation of art into life, be a rudiment of art already in life, and a habit of life still clinging to art.

The rudiment of art exists in our life from the very nature and

origin of art; since those instincts which make us appreciate the complex things of art have originated and developed during our contact with the things of reality; we love, in nature, those lines, colours, shapes, and so forth which art later combines for us on a larger scale; we love the elements of the work before the work itself is dreamed of. Thus the first condition for real artistic assimilation is already partly fulfilled from the very origin and history of our artistic perceptions. And quite of late, in our own country particularly, there has been a half instinctive, half deliberate attempt at supplying that much of the necessary familiarity with beautiful form and colour which is not provided by the hills and clouds and trees all about us. For, as during the best period of antiquity and the middle ages, with that flower of theirs which we call the Renaissance, the extraordinary activity of perception of form and colour produced not merely the imperishable works of independent and useless art, but also a great amount of beauty in all manner of humble, useful things; so, by a sort of reversing of phenomena, the laboriously acquired appreciation of the qualities of great works of art has in our time produced among a minority a greater irritability of artistic perception, a dissatisfaction with ugliness in common household properties, which has made people seek to surround themselves no longer with the hideous furniture, hangings, and utensils of twenty years ago, but with copies of those of the days when the sense of beauty which built cathedrals and painted Sixtine frescoes had its way also with the meanest chairs and tables and pots and pans. There are, indeed, some persons whom a smattering of modern ideas concerning the spontaneity of all things has made suspicious and contemptuous of this sudden pre-occupation about the shapes of chairs and tables, and the colours of carpets and chintzes; and who, because this movement is the result of deliberate study, and therefore artificial, predict that it must for this reason be sterile. But the processes to which we owe so many now apparently spontaneous things, transplantation, irrigation, cropping, grafting, are all of them perfectly deliberate and artificial acts; and as in point of fact all progress has originated in a minority, and the sole condition of its success is that the majority should be prepared to accept it, I think that this modern attempt at æsthetic improvement will certainly result, if not in improving our own art, at least in making us far more appreciative of the art of other times. For just as it seems doubtful whether a person who has always contemplated with perfect satisfied familiarity a sofa or wall-paper of hideous design and abominable colour, will really enjoy in a statue by Praxiteles or a picture by Titian design and colour which is beautiful; so also is it probable that a person accustomed from childhood to beautiful tones and colours in the carpet and walls of his room, will be far more likely to seek in statue or picture not psychological problems, historic evidence or romantic (and usually utterly gratuitous) suggestion, but the kind of beauty with which he is familiar in homely things and of which these great works are merely the most splendid

development. With this desire to introduce beauty into ordinary things is intimately connected another tendency of our day, but which has a moral as well as an artistic bearing—the noble tendency to make beauty accessible and familiar to every educated person. Art, when limited to such works as can be bought only by the very rich, becomes little better than the concomitant of French cookery, dresses from Worth, and hideously set diamonds: an object of ostentatious luxury; whereas if only a little of the artistic power concentrated in such work could be bestowed upon things of easy multiplication, small price, and ordinary use, it would not only bring pleasure into many lives in which pleasure is as scarce as flowers in a close, smoky town, but also train innumerable men and women into an habitual perception of beauty, without which they must wander through all the galleries provided for them by the nation with mere vacant, unfamiliar wonder, and leave them as poor of durable artistic impressions as they entered them. There are, doubtless, many things for which the writer must always envy the artist, greater freedom and charm of impression, and the ineffably delightful sense that he is reproducing and not merely reminding, showing and not merely suggesting; yet the writer has a more than compensating satisfaction in the thought that if pleasure he can give at all, he will give it to thousands of distant, unknown, pleasure-poor people; and this sort of feeling can nowadays, when little is to be done in the way of public monuments, be got by the artist only by condescending or in reality rising to the level of such designing as can either be largely diffused for household properties or as can be indefinitely multiplied and put within reach of all, as in illustrations, Christmas cards, toy-books, and similar humble things. But of this, and of the far more honourable position occupied by men like Mr. Randolph Caldecott or Mr. Walter Crane than by many a fastidious genius who produces works worthy of Giorgione or of Velasquez, in order that they may grace the smoking-room of an “h”-less cotton-spinner, or the staircase of a Jewish broker, much more should be said than I can say in this place.

I let myself be tempted into digression upon a subject in which the moral dignity of art, or rather of artists, seems to me greatly concerned, just at the moment when I had pointed out that of the two conditions necessary for the assimilation of artistic impressions into life, the one, namely, that the rudimentary perceptions of form and colour beauty should already be familiar to us before we go to great art, was not only partially provided by our natural surroundings, but further and most importantly facilitated by the recent movement in favour of giving beauty of form and colour to the necessaries which surround our daily home life. But there remains the other condition, whose fulfilment seems to me almost as necessary for the real absorption of art into life—the condition that there should be in our manner of receiving artistic impressions something analogous to that absence of strain, that familiarity with which we unconsciously assimilate the other impressions of our lives.

Now, it so happens that the tendency of our time is towards rendering more and more difficult the fulfilment of this second condition, and that this is due to that self-same interest in art which has been so beneficial in beautifying common things; by the same droll, but quite accountable, self-contradiction which makes enthusiasts for old architecture combine to protect the horrid disfigurement of historic buildings by the architects of the seventeenth and eighteenth century because they are in terror of the possible disfigurement thereof by the architects of our own day; the protection against modern Vandalism being freely extended to the Vandal work of the past. For this comparatively recent preoccupation about art has, while tending to surround ordinary men and women with beautiful furniture and accessories, at the same time induced a perfect habit of removing works of art from their natural and often beautiful surroundings in order to place them in a kind of artificial Arabia Petrea of vacuity and ugliness. I should call this the modern gallery and concert tendency. We are so horribly afraid that a picture should get damaged by the smoke of the candles on the altar whence its Madonna, seated on her carpeted throne before the lemon spaliers, and its viol and lute playing angels rise almost fairy-like from among the freshly-cut sweet peas and roses, the scarlet pomegranate, and bright pink oleander blossoms in the coarse jars before it; we are so horribly afraid that smoke or sacristan (both freely taken into account by the painter) should possibly injure this picture, that we hasten to buy it, new frame it, stick it up under the glaring light of a gallery, among six dozen other pictures which either kill or are killed by it, with perhaps the additional charm of a plate glass, which reflects the outlines of the benches and chairs and the beautiful faces of the gaping or loafing visitors. And in our fervent appreciation we thus make it infinitely more difficult for the work of art to be appreciated. No, not appreciated; I have used the wrong word. We *do* appreciate our works of art; we know all about the filiation of the schools and the characteristics of the epoch; we know, every ignoramus of us, that, after all, there are only three or four Leonardos and two Giorgiones in the wide world, that all the other exquisite things are "mere school-work, or by some imitator of the seventeenth century." We know that we must not let our feelings cozen us with respect to antiques; that, after all, we have only five or six utterly battered pieces of stone which can be unhesitatingly proved to be the statues mentioned by Pausanias, all the rest being the less talked of the better. All this we know, and the going to a gallery becomes daily more like a solemn sitting in judgment or listening to evidence; we grow every day more and more appreciative. But do we enjoy more and more or less and less? Enjoy freely and simply; let the impressions sink deliciously into us; keep them clinging to us as the unfading perfume of certain Eastern essences? I think, if we ask ourselves honestly, we shall find that we do so daily less and less. We shall find that even as some of our moments of keenest musical pleasure

have been during the casual hearing, in a church into which we have strayed, from a window as we passed along the street, some familiar melody sung certainly not by Madame Patti, played certainly not by Joachim or Rubinstein; so also the impressions of full artistic enjoyment are strongest, not from mornings in the Elgin Room or the Louvre, but from an hour or so of rambling through some old town like Verona, or Padua, or Siena, where we have found some picture by Girolamo dai Libri, or Moroni, or Sodoma isolated over an altar, in the place, among the cheap finery, the tarnished finery, in the solitude and silence for which it was painted by its artist.

But we are too persuaded of the awful value of art to leave it where it can be quietly enjoyed; instead of letting it crumble into vague impressions which are the rich and fruitful soil of our mind, we like to embalm art, to mummify it splendidly, to let it grow into a useless, utterly inorganic, unassimilated piece of grandeur. The fact is that instead of considering a fine statue or picture or piece of music as something very akin, in mode of impressing us and value, to a fine group of trees, or a fine sheet of water, or a fine cluster of clouds, we have contracted an almost unconscious but intensely strong habit of considering such things from an historical, scientific, state-record point of view: as a papyrus of Pharaoh or a prepared cobra in a glass jar. Hence we have for our artistic heirlooms scruples exactly like those we should have about such scientific gimcracks. If a papyrus is incomplete, we do not set our learned men to patching it; and if a statue is hideously mutilated, we do not let our artists restore it; entirely overlooking the fact that the only value of the papyrus is in the authenticated facts it hands down from antiquity, whereas the only value of the statue is the beauty which that unrepaired mutilation may easily have marred. I am far from thinking that the Renaissance was right in having modern arms given to figures which had quite balance and completeness enough without such restorations; I am thinking at present of the question of noses and their absence; and I am well aware that I shall be set down as an utter Vandal for suggesting the mere question whether the worst restoration is not a less barbarity for us to inflict than the deliberate condemnation of some noble antique head to continue for ever a partial eyesore? Yet, feeling myself already a Vandal, I am hardened to the accusation, and I put forward my suggestion, which is as follows: No modern nose could disfigure or alter an antique head one-millionth part as much as that hideous wound (as in our lovely Demeter of the British Museum) which not only alters the whole relations of the features and distorts the most beautiful face by its unseemly rough flatness and its stump between eyes and mouth, but gives a loathsome sense of disease as completely distorting of the intellectual aspect of an antique as the physical mutilation is of its visual beauty. Nor do I know whether a collection of Phidian and Praxitelian gods and goddesses, looking like so many maimed and scrofulous creatures out of Orcagna's

Triumph of Death, would have pleased a Greek; nor whether in our prudery about restoration we are not in reality respecting less the genius of the great masters who planned whole, entire, healthy figures, than a ragamuffin's hand which defaced their work. Be this as it may, our modern fear of restoration greatly increases, instead of diminishing, the natural difficulty of assimilating impressions of beauty. It is left to our minds to reconstruct the mutilated statues; and after the greatest strain in this direction, we go away with the impression not so much of sane, living beauty, as of depressing, puzzling, and often actually revolting imperfection. Another form of this modern appreciation of art, which makes art more and more difficult to assimilate into life, is the indignation of many people at such hotch-potch things as operas; because in every opera there is so much that is wholly unmusical, or of small musical value; because an opera is not the same serious concern as an oratorio or a concert. It is perfectly true, as for instance Mr. Edmund Gurney has pointed out, that there is no possibility of making an opera into a well-blended mixture of several arts. But just for that reason there is in this incongruous hotch-potch a power of bringing art into life much greater than there is in oratorio or concert. The strain of a concert, of the mere attention of the ear for two hours, while the mind and eye remain idle, is æsthetically wrong: it taxes instead of refreshing the musical sense; it is good for people who want to know what certain music is like, not for people who want to enjoy it. In the opera, on the contrary, the musical impressions are separated into groups by other æsthetical impressions or by impressions of real life: the melodies may be taken or left at will, a *sine quâ non* this of all æsthetical enjoyment; they are not forced upon one whether one be fit to enjoy them or not. An opera is a sort of little epitome of life: you move, look about, follow an action with eyes and mind, look at faces, dresses, and movements, take in words and sights; see and chat with your friends; and if, with all this, you listen to the music, it is freely, as you would listen to the sound of birds among the numerous impressions of a walk in the country. It is quite wonderful how a little cheap plot, a little cheap scenery, dress and gesticulation, a little cheap words, a little talk with a neighbour or watching of unknown faces, how all this trumpery refreshes, enables one really to assimilate music. The explanation is that in this case our life, into which the music (if it is to be of any use) is to be absorbed, is going on, has all its powers of assimilation due to easy and general excitement. In the case of a concert our minds are tied as with a ligature: we may plunge our soul in music, but our spiritual life-blood is stagnant, and we are neither warmed nor refreshed. The difference between an opera and a concert is that between a town, with all its trivial details and its statues and pictures here and there, and an awful expanse of gallery. Hence I have called this modern tendency towards isolating art out of life, the gallery and concert tendency; and it is very principally as a signal example of

this gallery and concert tendency that I resent the removal of the Botticellis from the Villa Lemmi. The villa with its frescoes was like some quiet evening with open windows, when the music is interrupted by conversation ; and when the sough of the trees and the chirping of the crickets outside, the noise of the children on the stairs within, keeps up a sense that besides art nature exists and life goes on. Of course such matters are often purely economical : a man cannot be expected to forego many thousands of francs for the sake of the superior artistic pleasure of a very few strangers, nor can a nation be expected to be so civilised as to prefer possessing frescoes among exquisite surroundings hundreds of miles off, to possessing those same frescoes among arid surroundings within a few yards. No one can blame the owner of Villa Lemmi for selling his frescoes, nor the French Government for buying them. But those should be blamed to whom the kind of action typified by this Villa Lemmi business is a matter of great pride and self-congratulation, a sort of triumph of civilisation ; the daily increasing class of people who care for art, but who see nevertheless in any statue or picture still unmolested in its original church or villa, merely a sort of huge æsthetic specimen, which must be immediately uprooted or run through with a pin, that it may as soon as possible enrich some artistic herbarium, or collection of dead butterflies.

Meanwhile the little villa near Careggi looks as if nothing whatever more wonderful or important than the reaping of the corn, the bleaching of the wheat, the birth of an additional calf or farmer's brat, had taken place since this time last year. The red cart is drawn up outside the old gate with its stone escutcheon, while the vegetables from the garden or the barrels from the vineyard on the hill-side are being piled into it ; and the row of bells on the horse's brass-studded harness jingle as he shakes his fly-worried head ; the cows are still being milked in the dark stable by the pale-green mulberry-tree ; the vines still pruned on the spalier along the blackened wall ; the roses still blow, and shed their pink petals on the strawberry beds all round the house ; the brass pitcher still goes up and down on its wire through the lichen-stained, cloistered court ; the peasant children still swing between the columns ; the old villa, with its square tower opened into a pillared loggia, looks just the same among the green cornfields and dark cypresses, against its background of olive-grey hills. The same as it did last year ; the same, most likely, as it did four hundred years ago. It has lost its frescoes, but, for all the greatness of Botticelli, it has lost less than have lost those poor, hustled, jostled paintings, expatriated, exiled on to that Louvre staircase : and, though it be quite forgotten and neglected henceforward, the Villa Lemmi has lost less than have we, good, self-satisfied people, in losing the sense that a painting is better in a farmhouse where it can be enjoyed, than in the most superb gallery where it will be overlooked.

The Curse of the Catafalques.

I THINK I may safely say that, until the strange event which I am now about to relate, I had never been brought into close contact with anything of a supernatural character. I may have been so, of course; but if I was, the circumstance made no lasting impression upon me. In the Curse of the Catafalques, however, I experienced a horror, so weird, so altogether unusual, that I fear it will be some time before I can wholly forget it. Indeed, I have not been really well ever since.

I was not a success at home; in my anxiety to please a wealthy uncle upon whom I was practically dependent, I had submitted myself to a series of competitive examinations for a variety of professions, but had failed successively in all. I found afterwards, too late, that this was partly due to the fact that I had omitted to prepare myself by any particular course of study, which it would seem is almost indispensable to success in these intellectual contests.

This was the view which my uncle himself took of the case, and conceiving that I was by no means likely to retrieve myself by any severe degree of application in the future—in which he was perfectly right—he had me shipped out to Australia, where he had correspondents and friends who were to put things in my way.

They did put all manner of things in my way, and, as was only to be expected, I came to grief over every one of them. So at last, after giving a fair trial to every opening provided for me, I became convinced that my uncle had made a grave mistake in believing that I was suited for a colonial career. I resolved to return home and tell him so, and give him one more opportunity of repairing his error. He had failed to understand my capabilities, but I did not then (nor do I now) reproach him for that. It is a difficulty which I have felt myself.

I now come to the period at which my story begins. I had booked my passage home by one of the Orient Line steamships from Melbourne to London, and, going on board about an hour before the ship was to leave her moorings, I made my way at once to the state-room which I was to share with a fellow-passenger, and found the fellow-passenger there before me. My first view of him was not reassuring: he was a tall cadaverous young man of about my own age, and when I came in he was rolling restlessly upon the floor and uttering hollow groans in a really painful and distressing manner.

I did my best to encourage him. "This will never do," I said: "if you're like this now, my good sir, what will you be when we're fairly

started!—you must reserve yourself for that. And why roll? The ship will do all that for you by-and-by.”

He explained, with some annoyance, I thought, that he was suffering from mental agony—not sea-sickness. The possession of my fellow-creatures’ secrets has always a certain degree of interest for me, while it seldom proves unremunerative; so by a little careful questioning I soon discovered what was troubling my companion, whose name, as I also learned, was Augustus McFadden.

His story was shortly this: He had lived all his life in the Colony, where he was doing very fairly, when an eccentric old aunt of his over in England happened to die. She left him nothing, but gave the bulk of her property to a young lady, the daughter of a baronet of ancient family, in whom she was interested. No conditions were attached to the gift, but the testatrix stated it to be her earnest desire that the lady should, if possible, accept the hand of her nephew Augustus, should he come over to England and offer it within a certain time, and she had also communicated, by letter, her wishes in this respect to McFadden shortly before her death.

“Chlorine’s father,” said McFadden—“Chlorine is *her* name, you know” (I thought it was rather a bilious kind of name)—“Sir Paul Catafalque, wrote to me, inclosing his daughter’s photograph, and formally inviting me in her name to come over and do my best to carry out the last wishes of the departed—he added that my aunt’s executors would shortly forward me a packet, in which I should find certain explanations and directions for my guidance. . . . I did not wait for its arrival—I felt that my poor aunt’s wishes were sacred—the photograph was an eminently pleasing one—and so,” he added, with a heavy sigh, “I wrote at once to Sir Paul, accepting the invitation—miserable wretch that I am, I pledged my honour to present myself as a suitor! and now, now here I am actually embarked on this desperate errand!”

Here he seemed inclined to begin to roll again, but I stopped him. “Really,” I said, “I think in your place, with a fair chance of obtaining a baronet’s daughter of pleasing appearance with a large fortune, I should try to bear up.”

“You think so?” he groaned. “You don’t know all! After I had despatched that fatal letter, the packet with my aunt’s instructions arrived. When I read the hideous revelations that packet contained, and knew the horrors to which I had unintentionally pledged myself, my hair stood on end (it is still on end—feel it)—but it was too late! Here I am, engaged to carry out a task from which my inmost soul recoils. If I dared but retract!”

“Then why in the name of common sense don’t you retract?” I said. “Write and say you have changed your mind, regret that a previous engagement deprives you of the pleasure of accepting—all that sort of thing.”

“I would,” he said, “but I am ashamed—her photograph is that of

a being whose contempt it would be agony to me to feel I had incurred. And, if I backed out of it now, she would despise me, wouldn't she?"

I owned that it was very likely indeed.

"You see my dilemma—I cannot retract; on the other hand, I dare not attempt to carry out my undertaking. The only thing that could at once save me and my honour would be my death on the voyage out—she would not suspect my cowardice then, my memory would be sacred to her!"

"Well," I said, "you can die on the voyage out if you like—there need be no difficulty about that. All you have to do is just to slip over the side some dark night when no one is looking at you. I tell you what," I added (for I began to feel an odd sort of interest in the poor weak creature): "if you don't find your nerve equal to it when it comes to the point, I'll give you a leg over myself!"

"I never intended to go as far as that," he said, rather pettishly and without any sign of gratitude for my offer. "It would be quite enough if she could be made to believe that I had died. I could live on here as before, happy in the thought that she was cherishing my memory, instead of scorning it. But then how can she be made to believe it? That's the difficulty."

"Precisely," I said; "you can't very well write and inform her that you died on the voyage. You might do this, though—sail to England as you propose, and then seek her out under another name and break the news to her."

"I might do that, to be sure," he said, with some animation; "I certainly should not be recognised—she has no photograph of me—I never have been photographed . . . but no," he added with a shudder, "it's no use—I can't do it, I dare not trust myself under that roof! I must find some other way. Listen," he said, after a short pause; "you have given me an idea—you are going to London . . . they live near it, at a place called Parson's Green. Can I ask a great favour from you? Will you seek them out and, as a fellow-voyager of mine, call upon her? I do not ask you to tell a positive untruth—but if in the course of the interview you could contrive to convey the impression that I had died on the passage home, you would be doing me a service I can never repay."

"I should much prefer to do you a service that you *could* repay," I could not help suggesting.

"She will not require strict proof. I could give you papers and things that would abundantly convince her you came from me. You will do me this great kindness—say that you will?"

I hesitated for some time; not so much from conscientious scruples, as from a disinclination to give myself so much trouble for an entire stranger, gratuitously—but McFadden used arguments that have always had considerable weight with me, and so at last I consented to execute this little commission for him—and a consideration.

"The only thing now is," I said, when this was settled, "how would you prefer to pass away? How would it be if I made you fall over and be devoured by a shark? That would be picturesque and striking, and I could do myself justice over the shark. I should make her weep considerably!"

"That will not do at all!" he said irritably. "Chlorine is a girl of delicate sensibilities—it would disgust her to picture any suitor of hers spending his last conscious moments inside a beastly repulsive thing like a shark. I do not wish to be associated in her mind with anything so unpleasant. I will die, sir, of a low fever (of a non-infectious type), at sunset, gazing at her portrait with my fading eyesight, and breathing with my last gasp a tender prayer for her welfare—she will cry more over that, sir!"

"I think I could work that up very effectively—it ought to be touching," I said; "but if you are going to expire in my state room, I think I ought to know a little more about you than I do now. We have a little time yet before we sail; perhaps you would not object to spend it in coaching me up in your life's history?"

He did more than that—he supplied me with several documents to study on the voyage, and even abandoned to me the whole of his travelling arrangements, which proved very complete and serviceable.

And then the "All ashore" bell rang, and McFadden, as he bade me farewell, took from his pocket a bulky packet: "You have saved me!" he said. "Now I can banish every recollection of this miserable episode. . . . I need preserve my poor aunt's directions no longer. Let them go, then, with the rest of it!" And, before I could prevent him, he had fastened a heavy jack-knife to the parcel, and dropped it through the cabin-light into the sea.

He went ashore, and I have never seen him or heard of him since; but during the voyage I began to think seriously over the affair, and the more I thought of the task I had undertaken, the less I liked it.

I was on my way to harrow up a poor young lady's feelings by a perfectly fictitious account of the death of this poor-spirited creature, who selfishly chose thus to spare his reputation.

It was not a pleasant commission, and had McFadden's terms been a degree less liberal I doubt if I could have brought myself to undertake it. But it struck me that Chlorine might prove not inconsolable under judiciously sympathetic treatment; and then she was wealthy, and lost none of her wealth by not marrying McFadden.

On the other hand, I had not a penny, while my prospects might not appear roseate in her parents' eyes.

I studied her photograph; it showed me a pale, pensive, but distinctly pretty face, without much strength of character, pointing to a plastic nature which it would not be difficult for a man of my personal advantages to win and subdue had I the recommendation, like McFadden, of an aunt's dying wishes.

In McFadden's place, favoured by the romance which invested the whole affair, Chlorine's money would have been mine in a month !

Then came the thought—why should I not procure myself these advantages ?

Nothing was easier. I had only to present myself as Augustus McFadden (who was hitherto a mere name to them) ; the information I already had as to his past life would enable me to support the character respectably, and as it seemed that the baronet lived in great seclusion, I could contrive to keep out of the way of the few friends and relations I had in London until my position was secure.

The scheme gradually came to exert a strange fascination over me ; it opened out a far more manly and honourable means of obtaining a livelihood than any I had previously contemplated.

It could injure no one—not McFadden, for he had given up all pretensions, while his regard for his reputation would be more completely gratified than ever ; for I flattered myself that I should come nearer Chlorine's ideal of him than he himself could ever have done. He had resigned himself to be tearfully regretted for a brief period ; he would be fondly, it might be madly, loved—by proxy, it is true—but then that was far more than he deserved.

Chlorine would regain a suitor instead of hearing of his decease, while his mere surname could make no possible difference to her.

And it was a distinct benefit to *me* ; for with the aid of my assumed name and character success was almost a certainty.

So, after really less mental deliberation than might be expected, I made up my mind to personate the chicken-hearted McFadden—and if ever an unfortunate man was bitterly punished for a harmless, if not actually a pious, fraud, by a season of intense and protracted physical terror, I was that person !

II.

After arriving in England, and before presenting myself in my new character at Parson's Green, I took one precaution, to assure myself that I was in no danger of throwing myself away in a fit of youthful impulsiveness. I went to Somerset House, and carefully examined a copy of the late Miss Petronia McFadden's last will and testament.

Nothing could have been more satisfactory ; a sum of between forty and fifty thousand pounds was Chlorine's unconditionally, a marriage with McFadden was merely recommended, and there was nothing whatever in the will to prevent her property from passing under the entire control of a future husband.

After this I could no longer restrain my ardour ; and so, one foggy afternoon about the middle of December, I found myself in a cab driving down the King's Road, Chelsea, on my way to the house in which I reckoned upon winning a comfortable independence.

We reached Parson's Green in time—a small, triangular plot, bor-

dered on two of its sides by humble cottages and beerhouses, and on the third by some ancient mansions, gloomy and neglected looking, but not without traces of their former consequence.

The cab stopped before the gloomiest of them all, a square, grim house, with dull small-paned windows, uncurtained and heavy-sashed, flanked by two narrow and slightly projecting wings, and built of dingy brick faced with yellow stone. Some old scrollwork railings, with a corroded frame in the middle, which had once held an oil lamp, separated it from the road; inside was a semicircular patch of rank grass, and a damp gravel sweep led from the heavy gate to a square portico, supported by two wasted black wooden pillars.

As I pulled the pear-shaped bell-handle, and heard the bell tinkling and jangling fretfully within, and when I glanced up at the dull house-front looming cheerless out of the fog-laden December twilight, my confidence failed me for the first time. I was almost inclined to give up the whole thing and run away; but before I had made up my mind a mouldy, melancholy butler came out and opened the gate, and my opportunity was gone for ever.

I remembered later that, as I walked up the gravel sweep, a wild and wailing scream pierced the heavy silence—it seemed half a lament, half a warning; but coming, as I believe it did, from one of the locomotives on the District Railway hard by, I attached no particular importance to it.

I followed the butler through a dank and chilly hall, where an antique lamp was glimmering inside its dusty stained-glass panes, up a broad carved staircase, and along tortuous panelled passages, until at last he ushered me into a long and rather low reception-room, scantily furnished with the tarnished mirrors and spindle-legged brocaded furniture of the last century.

A tall and meagre old man, with a long white beard and haggard, sunken black eyes, was sitting on one side of the high old-fashioned chimney-piece; opposite him was a limp little old lady, with a nervous, anxious expression, and dressed in trailing black robes relieved by a little yellow lace about the head and throat. I recognised at once that I was in the presence of Sir Paul Catafalque and his wife.

They both rose and advanced arm-in-arm to meet me, with a slow, stately solemnity. "You are very welcome!" they said, in a faint hollow voice. "We thank you for this proof of your chivalry and devotion. Such courage and self-sacrifice will have their reward!"

I did not quite understand how I could be considered to have given any proofs, as yet, of chivalry or devotion; but it was gratifying, of course, to find that they looked at matters in that light, and I begged them not to mention it.

And then, a slender figure, with a drooping head, a wan face, and large sad eyes, came softly down the dimly lighted room to me, and I met my destined bride for the first time.

I saw her eyes first anxiously raised to my face, and then resting upon it with a certain ineffable relief and satisfaction in them at the discovery that the accomplishment of Miss Petronia's wishes would not be personally distasteful.

I think that, upon the whole, I was myself slightly disappointed; her portrait had considerably flattered her; the real Chlorine was thinner and paler than I had imagined, while there was a settled, abstracted melancholy in her manner which seemed likely to render her society depressing.

I have always preferred a touch of archness and animation in womankind, and I should have greatly preferred to enter a more cheerful family; but, under all the circumstances, I felt scarcely in a position to be too particular.

For some days after my arrival I remained with the Catafalques as their honoured guest, every opportunity being afforded me for establishing nearer and dearer relations with the family.

But it was not a lively period; they went nowhere, no visitors ever called or dined, the days dragged slowly by in a dull and terrible monotony in that dim tomb of a house, which I found I was not expected to leave, except now and then when I contrived to steal out to smoke a pipe along the Putney road in the foggy evenings after dinner.

The diligence with which I had got up McFadden's antecedents enabled me to give perfectly satisfactory answers to most of the few questions that were put to me, and for the rest I drew on my imagination. But what puzzled me for some time was their general attitude to myself; there was something of tearful admiration in it, of gratitude, a touch of pity too as for some youthful martyr, blended with an anxious hope.

Now I was well aware that this was not the ordinary attitude of the parents of an heiress to an obscure and penniless suitor. I could only account for it at last by the supposition that there was some latent defect in Chlorine's temper or constitution which entitled the man who won her to commiseration; this explained, too, their evident anxiety to get rid of her. Anything of this kind would be a drawback of course, but forty or fifty thousand pounds would more than compensate for it—I could not expect *everything*.

I had more trouble in bringing Chlorine to confess that her heart was mine than I had counted upon at first, although my ultimate success was never for a moment doubtful. But she seemed to have an unaccountable shrinking from saying the word which bound us—a dread which she confessed was not for her own sake, but for mine. I thought such extreme self-depreciation very morbid, and devoted every energy to arguing her out of it.

And at last I succeeded; it evidently cost her a great effort. I believe she swooned immediately afterwards, but of this I cannot be cer-

tain, for I did not lose a moment in seeking Sir Paul and clenching the matter before Chlorine had time to repent.

His manner of receiving me certainly struck me as odd and scarcely encouraging. "We must hope for the best, my boy," he said with a rather dreary sigh. "I own I am too selfish to try to deter you from your high purpose. You would probably prefer as little delay as possible."

"I should," I replied promptly, pleased with his discernment.

"Then leave all preliminaries to me: you shall be informed when the day and time have been settled. It will be necessary, as you are aware, to have your signature to this document, but I feel it my duty to warn you solemnly that by signing it you make your decision irrevocable. There is yet time if your courage fails you."

After such an intimation as that, I need not say that I was in such a hurry to sign that I did not even trouble myself to make out the somewhat crabbed writing in which the terms of the agreement were set out. I presumed that since it was binding on me, the baronet would, as a man of honour, consider it equally conclusive on his side. Looking back on it all now, it seems simply extraordinary that I should have been so easily satisfied, have taken so little pains to find out exactly the position in which I was placing myself, but I fell an easy victim to a naturally confiding and unsuspecting disposition.

"Say nothing of this to Chlorine," said Sir Paul, as I gave him back the document, "until the final arrangements are made. She must not be needlessly distressed, poor child, before the time."

This seemed strange, too, but I promised to obey, supposing that he knew best.

And so for some days after that I made no mention to Chlorine of the approaching day which was to unite us: we were much together, and I learnt to feel a personal esteem for her which was quite independent of her main attractions. Her low spirits, however, seemed constitutional, and I anticipated a dull and drizzly honeymoon.

One afternoon the baronet took me aside mysteriously. "Prepare yourself, Augustus," he said: "it is all arranged. The event upon which our dearest hopes depend will take place to-morrow, in the Grey Chamber, and of course at midnight."

This I thought a curious time and place for the ceremony, but I knew his eccentric love of retirement, and supposed he had procured some very special form of licence.

"You do not know the place," he added: "come with me and I will show it you, from the outside at least."

So he led me up the broad staircase, and stopping before an immense door covered with black baize and studded with brass nails, which gave it a hideous resemblance to a coffin-lid, he pressed a spring and it fell slowly back, revealing a long dim gallery leading to a heavy oak door with cumbrous metal plates and fastenings.

“At twelve o'clock to-morrow night—Christmas Eve,” he said, under his voice, “you will present yourself at the Grey Chamber—it is there that you must go through it.”

I wondered why he should choose such a place for it, it would have been more cheerful in the drawing-room, but it was evidently a fancy of his, and I did not care to oppose it—I was too happy. I hastened to Chlorine, and, with her father's permission, told her that the crowning moment of both our lives was fixed.

It had the most astonishing effect upon her—she fainted away, just as she had done at the moment of giving her consent. I thought such conduct hypersensitive, and as soon as I had succeeded in bringing her round I remonstrated with her seriously. “It is highly creditable to your maidenly delicacy, my love,” I said, “but it is hardly complimentary to *me!*”

“Do not think I doubt you, Augustus,” she said, “but the ordeal is so terrible.”

“There are cases,” I said grimly, “in which it has not proved absolutely fatal; the victim occasionally survives the ceremony, I believe.”

“I will try to hope so,” she said earnestly. I thought her insane, which alarmed me for the validity of the marriage. “I am weak, I know,” she resumed; “but I shudder to think of you in that Grey Chamber, going through it all alone.”

My worst fears seemed confirmed: no wonder her parents were grateful to me for relieving them of such a responsibility. “May I ask where *you* intend to be at the time?” I inquired.

“You will not think us unfeeling, Augustus,” she said. “Papa thought that we should endeavour to forget our anxiety by seeking some distraction. So we are going to Madame Tussaud's directly after dinner.”

“If you forget your anxiety at Madame Tussaud's, while I am cooling my heels in the Grey Chamber,” I said, “I don't quite see how any clergyman will see his way to performing the ceremony—they won't marry us separately, you know.”

This time it was her turn to be astonished. “You are joking!” she cried: “you cannot really believe we are to be married in the Grey Chamber?”

“Then where are we to be married?” I asked, in utter bewilderment. “Hardly at Madame Tussaud's?”

She turned upon me with what seemed a sudden misgiving. “Augustus, tell me,” she said anxiously; “you have read your aunt's last message to you?”

Now, thanks to McFadden, this was my one weak point. I had *not* read it, and I felt myself upon delicate ground. It evidently related to business of importance which was to be transacted in this Grey Chamber, and, as the real McFadden clearly knew all about it, to confess ignorance would have been suicidal just then.

"Of course, darling, of course," I said hastily; "it was my silly joke—you are quite right, there is something I have to arrange in the Grey Chamber before I can call you mine. I did not think you knew. But, tell me, why does it make you so uneasy?" I added, thinking that it might be prudent to find out what particular formality was expected from me.

"I cannot help it," she sighed; "the test will be so searching; are you sure that you are prepared at all points? I overheard papa say that no precaution could be neglected. . . . If this should come between us after all!"

It was all clear now; the baronet was not so easy to satisfy in the choice of a son-in-law as I had imagined; he had no intention after all of accepting me without some inquiry into my previous habits and prospects. With characteristic eccentricity he was going to make the examination more impressive by holding it in this ridiculous midnight interview.

I thought I could easily contrive to satisfy the baronet, and said as much to Chlorine, with the idea of consoling her. "Why do you persist in treating me like a child, Augustus?" she said petulantly. "They have tried to hide all from me, but at least I know that in the Grey Chamber you will have to encounter one far more formidable, far harder to satisfy, than poor dear papa."

"I see you know all, dearest," I said; "I was wrong. I will not try to deceive you again. I *shall* have to encounter some one who is all you say he is, but don't be afraid, I shall come out of it with flying colours—you shall see!"

I said no more about it then; but I saw that matters were worse than I had thought. I should have to deal with some stranger, some exacting and suspicious friend or relation, perhaps; or, more probably, a keen family solicitor, who would put awkward questions, and even be capable of insisting on strict settlements.

Love, in my opinion, has nothing in common with Law. Law, with its offensively suspicious restraints, its indelicately premature provisions—I would have nothing to do with it. I would refuse to meet a family solicitor anywhere, and I resolved to tell Sir Paul so at the first convenient opportunity.

The opportunity came after dinner, when we had retired to the drawing-room. Lady Catafalque was dozing uneasily in an armchair behind a firescreen, and Chlorine, in the inner room, was playing funereal dirges in the darkness, pressing the notes of the old piano with a languid uncertain touch.

I drew a chair beside Sir Paul's, and began to broach the subject calmly and temperately. "I find," I said, "we have not quite understood one another about this affair in the Grey Chamber. When I agreed to make that appointment there, I thought—well, it doesn't matter what I thought—what I want to say now is, that, while I was

always ready to give you, as Chlorine's father, every information you could reasonably require, I feel a delicacy in discussing my private affairs with an entire stranger."

"I don't in the least understand you," he said. "What are you talking about?"

I began all over again. "In short," I concluded, "I don't recognise your solicitor's right to interfere in the matter, and I decline to meet him."

"Did I ever ask you to meet a solicitor anywhere?" he said sternly. "And do you mean to tell me now that you do not know what has to be done to-morrow in the Grey Chamber?"

I saw that I was wrong again; but, as I was so obviously supposed to be thoroughly acquainted with the real nature of this perplexing appointment, I dared not betray my ignorance. I stammered something to the effect that I was referring to something else, some other interview which I had fancied was intended from some words of Chlorine's.

"What Chlorine could have said to give you such an idea," said the baronet, "I have no notion—here she is, to answer for herself."

The faint mournful music had died away whilst we were speaking, and, looking up, I saw Chlorine, a pale slight form framed in the archway between the two rooms.

Before her father could question her about the solicitor, however, she spoke, as if forced to do so by some irresistible hysterical excitement.

"Papa," she said trembling; "dearest mamma. . . . Augustus. . . . I can bear it no longer. All my life I have felt that we have lived this strange life under the shadow of some fearful Thing—a Thing which no home can possess and be a happy one. I never sought to know more than this—I dared not ask. . . . But now, when I know that Augustus, to whom I have given my first, my only love, must shortly face this ghastly presence, I cannot rest till I know exactly what the danger is that threatens him. You need not fear to tell me all, I can bear to know the worst."

Lady Catafalque awoke with a faint shriek, and began to wring her long mittened hands and moan feebly; Sir Paul seemed slightly discomposed and undecided. I began to feel exquisitely uncomfortable—Chlorine's words pointed to something infinitely more terrible than a mere solicitor.

"Poor girl!" said Sir Paul at last, "we concealed the whole truth for your good, but perhaps the time has come when the truest kindness will be to reveal all. . . . Augustus, break to her, as you best know how, the nature of the ordeal before you."

It was precisely what I would have given worlds to know myself, and I stared at his gloomy old face with what I felt were glassy and meaningless eyes. At last I managed to suggest that the story would come less harshly from a parent's lips.

"So be it," he said. "Chlorine, my darling, take a chair, and, yes, take a cup of tea before I begin." There was a little delay over this, the baronet being anxious that his daughter should be perfectly composed. No one thought about me, and I suffered tortures of suspense during the interval which I dared not betray.

At last Sir Paul was satisfied, and in a dull monotonous tone, and yet with a gloomy sort of pride and relish, too, at the exceptional nature of his affliction, he began his weird and almost incredible tale.

"For some centuries," he said, "our unhappy house has been afflicted with a Family Curse. One Humfrey de Catafalque, by his familiarity with the Black Art, as it was said, attracted to his service a kind of Familiar, a dread and supernatural Being. Living in bitter enmity with the whole of his relations, to whom he bore for some reason an undying grudge, he bequeathed this baleful Thing with refined malice to his descendants for ever, as an inalienable heirloom. It goes with the title. The head of the family for the time being is bound to assign it a secret apartment under his own roof, and as each member of our house succeeds to the ancestral rank and honours, he must seek an interview with the Curse (for by that name it has been called for generations). In that interview it is decided whether the spell is broken for ever, or whether the Curse is to continue its blighting influence, and hold him in miserable thralldom until he dies."

"Then are you one of its thralls, papa?" faltered Chlorine.

"I am," he said: "I failed to quell it, as every Catafalque, however brave and resolute, has failed yet. It checks all my accounts. I have to go and tremble before it annually, and even habit has not been able to rob that awful Presenee, with its cold withering eye, of all its terrors! I shall never get quite accustomed to it!"

Never in my wildest thoughts had I imagined anything one quarter so dreadful as this! I could not rest until I had satisfied myself that I was not affected by these alarming family disclosures.

"She's frightened," I said diplomatically, "she, ha, ha—she has got some idea I have to go through the same sort of thing, don't you see? Explain that to her. . . . I'm not a Catafalque, Chlorine, so it—it doesn't interfere with me, eh? does it, Sir Paul?"

"You mean well, Augustus," he said, "but we must deceive her no longer—she shall know the worst. Yes, my poor child," he went on, to Chlorine, whose eyes were wide with terror—like my own. "Unhappily, although our beloved Augustus is, as he says, not a Catafalque himself, it does concern him—he, too, must deliver himself up at the appointed hour, and brave the malevolence of the Curse of the Catafalques!"

I could not say a word—the horror of the idea was altogether too much for me—I fell back on my chair in a state of speechless collapse.

"Not only all new baronets," continued Sir Paul, "but every one who would seek an alliance with the females of our race must also undergo this test. Perhaps it is in some degree owing to this necessity that, ever

since Humfrey de Catafalque's diabolical bequest, every maiden of our house has died a spinster!" (Here Chlorine hid her face with a low wail.) "It is true that in 1770 one suitor was found bold enough to face the ordeal! He was conducted to the chamber where the curse was then lodged, and left there. Next day they found him outside the door—a gibbering maniac!"

I writhed on my chair. "Augustus!" cried Chlorine wildly, "promise you will never permit the Curse to turn you into a gibbering maniac! If I saw you gibber, I should die!"

I was very near gibbering then. I dared not trust myself to speak.

"Do not be afraid," said Sir Paul more cheerfully. "Augustus is happily in no danger. All is smooth for him!" (I began to brighten a little at this.) "His aunt Petronia had made a special study of these things, and had at last succeeded in discovering the master-word which alone can break the unhallowed spell. Her great interest in you, my child, and the reports she heard of her nephew's excellent character gave her the idea that he might be the instrument which would rid us of the ban for ever. Her belief was well founded. Augustus has nobly offered himself, and, with his aunt's instructions for his safeguard, failure is next to impossible."

Those instructions were somewhere at the bottom of the Melbourne docks! I could bear no more: "It's simply astonishing to me!" I said, "that you can calmly allow this hideous Curse, as you call it, to have things all its own way up to the present, in the nineteenth century, and not six miles from Charing Cross!"

"What can I do, Augustus?" he said helplessly.

"Do? Anything!" I retorted wildly (I hardly knew what I said). "Take it out for an airing (it must want an airing by this time): take it out—and lose it. Get both the archbishops to step in and lay it for you! Sell the house, and make the purchaser take it with the other fixtures, at a valuation. I wouldn't have such a thing in my house—it's not respectable! And I want you to understand one thing. My aunt never told me the whole truth. I knew there was some sort of a curse in the family—but I never dreamed it was as bad as *that!* I never intended to be shut up alone with it. And I shall not go near the Grey Chamber!"

"Not go near it!" they cried aghast.

"Not on any account!" I said, beginning to recover my firmness. "If the Curse has any business with me, let it come down and settle it here before you all, in a straightforward manner. I hate mysteries. On second thoughts," I added, fearing lest they might find means of acting on this suggestion, "I won't meet it anywhere."

"And why—why won't you meet it?" they asked breathlessly.

"Because," I explained desperately, "because I'm—I'm a Materialist" (I did not know I was anything of the sort, but I could not stay then to consider the point). "How can I have any dealings with a preposterous

supernatural something which reason forbids me to believe in? There's my difficulty—it would be inconsistent, and—and extremely painful to both sides."

"You forget," said Sir Paul, "that you are pledged—irrevocably pledged—you *must* meet it. And let me beg you, my dear boy, to be more careful what you say. The Curse knows all that passes beneath this roof. This shocking ribaldry may hereafter be terribly remembered against you!"

One short hour ago and I had counted Chlorine's fortune as virtually my own! Now I saw with feelings I cannot unveil in any magazine that the time had come to abandon all my pretensions. It was a terrible wrench—but I had no other course but to state what would effectually shatter my fondest hopes.

"I had no right to pledge myself," I said, with quivering lips, "under all the circumstances."

"What circumstances?" they all three demanded at once.

"Well, in the first place, I'm a base impostor—I am, indeed, I assure you," I said very earnestly: "I'm not Augustus McFadden at all; my real name is of no consequence, but it's not that. McFadden himself is, I regret to say, no more!"

Now, why I could not tell the plain truth here has always been a mystery to me. I suppose I had been lying so long that it was difficult to break myself of the habit at so short a notice, but I certainly did mix things up to a hopeless extent.

"Yes," I continued sorrowfully, "he is dead—he fell overboard during the voyage and a shark seized him almost immediately. It was my melancholy privilege to see him pass away. For one brief moment I saw him between the jaws of the creature, pale but composed (I refer to McFadden, you understand, not the shark); he just glanced up at me, and then, with a smile the sweetness of which I shall never forget (it was McFadden's smile, of course, not the shark's), he—he desired to be kindly remembered to you all (he was always courteous, poor fellow). Directly after that he was gradually withdrawn from my horror-stricken view."

In bringing the shark in at all I was acting contrary to my instructions, but I quite forgot them: all I could think of was how to escape making the acquaintance of the Curse of the Catafalques.

"Then, sir," said the baronet haughtily, "you have basely deceived us all!"

"That is what I was endeavouring to bring out," I replied. "You see it puts it quite out of my power to meet your family Curse; I do not feel myself entitled to intrude on it. So, if you will kindly let some one fetch a cab in a quarter of an hour——"

"Stop!" cried Chlorine. "Augustus (I will call you by that name still), you must not go like this! It was for love of me that you stooped to deceit, and—and—Mr. McFadden is dead. If he were alive, it might

be my duty to remain free for at least two years; but he lies within the shark, and—and—you have taught me to love you. You must stay—stay and brave the Curse—and we may yet be happy!”

How I blamed my folly in not telling the truth at first! “When—when—I said McFadden was dead,” I explained hoarsely, “I was not speaking quite correctly. It was another fellow the shark swallowed—in fact, it was another shark altogether. And McFadden is alive and well at Melbourne; but, feeling slightly alarmed at the Curse, he asked me to call and make his excuses. I have now done so, and will trespass no further on your kindness. So if you will tell somebody to bring a cab——”

“Pardon me,” said the baronet, “we cannot part in this way. I always feared that your resolution would break down in some such way—it is only natural. Do you think we cannot see that these extraordinary stories are prompted by a sudden panic? I quite understand it, Augustus. I cannot blame you for it; but to listen to you would be culpable weakness on my part. It will pass away—you will forget your fears to-morrow. You *must* forget them; for, remember, you have promised! I dare not let you run the danger of exciting the Curse by a deliberate insult. For your own sake, I shall take care that your solemn bond is not forfeited.”

I read beneath his words the innate selfishness which prompted them—the old man did not entirely believe me, and he was determined that he would not lose the smallest chance of escaping from the thralldom of his race by my means.

I raved, I protested, I implored—but all in vain; they would not believe a single word I said; they positively refused to release me; they insisted that, for my sake as well as their own, they were bound to insist upon my performing my engagement.

And, at last, Chlorine and her mother left the room with a little contempt in their pity for my unworthiness; and after that, Sir Paul conducted me to my room, and left me, as he said, to return to my senses.

III.

What a night I passed! Tossing sleeplessly from side to side under the hearse-like canopy of my old-fashioned bedstead, I tortured my fevered brain with vain speculations as to the fate the morrow would bring me.

I was perfectly helpless—I saw no way out of it; they would not believe me; they were bent upon offering me up as a sacrifice to this private Moloch of theirs, the very vagueness of which made it doubly fearful. If I had only some idea what it was like to look at, I might not feel quite so afraid of it; the impalpable awfulness of the thing was what I found so terrible—the very thought of it made me fling myself about in an ecstasy of horror.

But by degrees I grew calmer and able to consider my position with something like composure, until, by daybreak, I had come to a final resolution.

As I was evidently bound to meet my fate, the wisest course was to do so with a good grace; then, if by some fortunate chance I came well out of it, my future was insured. Whereas, if I went on repudiating myself to the very last, I might in time arouse suspicions which the most successful encounter with the Curse would not dispel.

And then, after all, the affair might have been much exaggerated. By keeping my head, and exercising all my powers of cool impudence, I might surely manage to hoodwink this formidable relic of mediæval superstition, which must have fallen rather behind the age by this time.

It might even turn out to be (though I confess I was not very sanguine as to this) as big a humbug as I was myself, and the interview resolve itself into a sort of augurs' meeting.

At all events, I resolved to see this mysterious business out, and trust to my customary good fortune to bring me safely through. I came down to breakfast something like my usual self, and I managed to reassure the family, in contradicting by word and deed my weakness of the night before.

From a mistaken consideration for me, they left me to myself for the whole of the day; and, although I was as determined as ever to make a bold fight for the fortune that I saw in danger of eluding me, I moped about that gloom-laden house with a depression that deepened every hour.

We dined almost in solemn silence; Sir Paul made no remark, except as he saw my hand approaching a decanter, when he would observe that I had need of a clear head and strong nerves that night, and warn me to beware of the brown sherry.

Chlorine and her mother stole apprehensive glances at me from time to time, and sighed heavily between the courses, their eyes brimming with unshed tears. It was not a lively meal.

It came to an end at last; the ladies rose, and Sir Paul and I sat brooding silently over the dessert. I think both of us felt a delicacy in beginning a conversation.

But before I could venture upon a safe remark, Lady Catafalque and Chlorine returned—dressed, to my unspeakable horror, in readiness to go out. Worse still, Sir Paul apparently intended to join them.

"It is now time to say farewell," he said, in his hollow voice. "You will need a season of self-preparation; you have more than three hours yet. At midnight you will go to the Grey Chamber. You will find the Curse prepared for you."

"You are not all going!" I cried. I had never expected this. They were not a gay family to sit with; but even their company was better than my own.

"We must," they said: "it is one of the traditions connected with the Curse. No human being but one must be in the house during the night appointed for the interview. The servants have already left it, and we ourselves are about to pass the night at a private hotel, after a brief visit to Madame Tussaud's, to allay, if possible, our terrible anxiety."

I believe at this I positively howled with terror—all the old fears came back with a sudden rush. "Don't leave me all alone with it!" I cried. "I shall go mad if you do!"

Sir Paul turned on his heel with a gesture of contempt, and his wife followed. Chlorine remained behind for one instant. I had never thought her so pretty before, as she looked at me with a yearning pity in her pale face.

"Augustus," she said, "show me I was not mistaken in you. I would spare you this if I could; but you know I cannot. Be brave, now, or you will lose me for ever!"

I felt a stronger determination to win her then than I had ever done before—her gentle appeal seemed to make a man of me once more; and, as I kissed the slender hand she held out to me, I vowed sincerely enough to prove myself worthy of her.

Almost immediately after that the heavy front door slammed behind them, the rusty old gate screeched like a banshee as it swung back with a hollow clang. I heard the carriage wheels grinding the slush, and knew that I was alone—shut up on Christmas Eve in that sombre house, with the Curse of the Catafalques for my only companion!

Somehow the generous ardour with which Chlorine had inspired me did not last very long. Before the clock struck nine I found myself shivering, and I drew up a clumsy old leathern armchair close to the fire, piled on the logs, and tried to overcome a horrible sensation of internal vacancy and look my situation fairly in the face.

However repugnant it might seem to one's ordinary common-sense ideas, there was no possible doubt that there was something of a supernatural order shut up in that great chamber, and also that, if I meant to win Chlorine, I should have to go up and have some kind of an interview with it.

If I could only have had some distinct idea of what this would be! What description of being should I find this Curse? Would it be aggressively ugly—like the bogie of my childish days? Or should I see an awful unsubstantial shape, draped in clinging black, with nothing visible but a pair of hollow burning eyes and one long, pale, bony hand? Really I could not decide which would be the more trying.

All the frightful stories I had ever read came crowding into my unwilling mind. One in particular of a Marshal Somebody, who, after much industry, succeeded in invoking an evil spirit, which came bouncing into the room, shaped like a gigantic ball with (I think) a hideous face

in the middle of it, and the horrified marshal could not get rid of it until after hours of hard praying and persistent exorcism.

Only suppose the Curse should be something like that!

Then there was another appalling tale I had read in some magazine—a tale of a secret chamber, too, and almost a parallel case to my own, where the heir of a great house had to go in and meet a mysterious aged person with strange eyes and an evil smile, who wanted to shake hands with him. I determined that I would steadfastly refrain from shaking hands with the Curse of the Catafalques.

If I had only had McFadden's aunt's instructions I should have felt safer; but I had no hint even for my conduct, and besides I was an impostor, about to confront a power which knew nearly everything! For a moment the desperate thought occurred to me of confessing all, and sobbing out my deceit upon its bosom. But suppose it had no such thing as a bosom, what then?

By this time I had worked up my nerves to such a pitch of terror that it was absolutely necessary to brace them. I did brace them. I emptied all three of the decanters, but Sir Paul's cellar being none of the best, the only result was that I began to feel exceedingly unwell without gaining any perceptible moral courage.

I dared not smoke, though tobacco might soothe me. The Curse, being old-fashioned, might object to it, and I was anxious to do nothing to prejudice it against me.

So I simply sat there and shook. Every now and then I heard steps on the glistening path outside; sometimes a rapid tread of some happy person no doubt on his way to scenes of Christmas revelry, and little dreaming of the miserable wretch he passed; sometimes the slow, elephantine tramp of the Fulham policeman on his beat.

What if I called him in and gave the Curse into custody—say for putting me in bodily fear, or for being found on the premises under suspicious circumstances?

There was a boldness in thus cutting the knot which rather fascinated me; but most probably, I thought, the stolid officer would decline to interfere on some pretext, and, even if he did, Sir Paul would be deeply annoyed to hear of his Family Curse spending its Christmas in the cell of a police station. He would certainly consider it a piece of unpardonable bad taste on my part.

So one hour passed. A few minutes after ten I heard footsteps again and voices in low consultation, as of a band of men outside the railings. Could there be any indication without of the horrors those walls contained?

But the gaunt house front kept its secret. They were merely the waits.

They struck up the old carol, "God rest you, merry gentleman, let nothing you dismay!" which, of course, was very appropriate, and followed it up with that most doleful of airs, "The Mistletoe Bough," which

they gave with some wheeziness but intense feeling. At first I had a vague comfort in listening. I felt that I was not quite alone, and I even had a faint hope that the Curse might hear and be softened by the strains. Such things have been known to happen at this season of the year. But they did play so infernally that I was soon convinced that such music could only have an irritating effect, and I rushed to the window and beckoned to them to go away.

I had better have left it alone, for they took it as an encouragement, and played on yet more villainously, while one of the band remained at the gate for quite a quarter of an hour, ringing incessantly, in the vain expectation of some gratuity.

This must have stirred the Curse up quite enough; but after they had gone there came a man with a barrel-organ, and his barrel-organ had been out in the weather for so long that it had become altogether demoralised, or, as it were, deranged. When he turned the handle it brayed out confused portions of its entire repertory all at once with a maddening effect. Even its owner seemed aware that there was something wrong, for he stopped occasionally, probably struck aghast at the din, but apparently he still hoped that by perseverance he would bring the instrument round, and Parson's Green being a quiet place for the experiment he remained there for some time, every fresh discord lessening my chances of success.

He went too at last, though not before he must have rendered the Curse absolutely rabid; and then, as the hour-hand stole on towards eleven, my excited fancy began to catch strange sounds echoing about the old house—sharp reports from the furniture, sighing moans in the windy passages, doors shutting, and, worse still, stealthy padding footsteps above and outside in the ghostly hall.

I sat there in a cold perspiration until I could really bear it no longer.

My nerves wanted more bracing than ever. I got out the spirit case, and after I had consumed several consecutive tumblers of brandy and water my fears began at last to melt rapidly away.

What a ridiculous bugbear I was making of the Thing after all! How did I know that I should not find this dreaded Curse as pleasant and gentlemanly a demon—or familiar, or whatever it was—as a man could wish to meet?

I would go up at once and wish it a merry Christmas. That would put it in a good temper. On the other hand, it might look as if I was afraid of it. Afraid! ha, ha! Why, for two straws I would go up and pull its nose for it, if it had a nose? At all events, I would go up to the door of the Grey Chamber, and defy it boldly—perhaps not exactly defy it, but just go as far as the corridor to get used to the neighbourhood.

I made my way with this object, rather unsteadily, up the dim and misty staircase, and opened the coffin-lid door which led to the corridor, down which I looked apprehensively.

The strange metal fittings on the massive door of the Grey Chamber seemed to be all flashing and sparkling with a mysterious pale light, like electricity, or perhaps phosphorus, and from under the door came a sullen red glow, while I heard within sounds like the roar of a mighty wind, above which rose at intervals peals of fiendish mirth, accompanied by a hideous dull clanking.

Evidently the Curse was getting up the steam to receive me.

I did not stay there long. It might dart out suddenly and catch me eavesdropping—a bad beginning of our acquaintance. I got back to the dining-room somehow, and found the fire out, and the time, which was just visible by the fast dimming lamp, a quarter to twelve.

Only fifteen more short minutes and, unless I gave up Chlorine and her money for ever, I must go up and knock at that awful door, and enter the presence of the frightful mystic Thing that was roaring and laughing and clanking inside.

I sat staring stupidly at the funereal black face of the clock, watching the long gold hand steal relentlessly on. In six minutes I should be beginning my desperate duel with one of the powers of darkness! It gave me a sick qualm as I thought of it, and still the time wore on.

I had but two precious minutes left, when the lamp gave a faint gurgling sob, like a death-rattle, and went out, leaving me in the dark alone.

If I lingered, the Curse might come down and fetch me, and the horror of this made me resolve to go up at once; punctuality might propitiate it.

I groped my way to the door, reached the hall, and stood there, swaying for a moment under the old stained-glass lantern. Then I began to be aware of the terrible fact that I was not in a condition to transact any business successfully—much less to go through an encounter with the Curse of the Catafalques! I had disregarded Sir Paul's well-meant warning at dinner—I was not my own master—I was lost!

I was endeavouring to get upstairs when the clock in the room below tolled twelve, and from without the faint peal and chime from distant steeples proclaimed that it was Christmas morning—my hour had come!

I made one more desperate effort to go up, and then—then, upon my word, I don't know how it was, but I happened to see my hat on the hat-rack below, and I did what I venture to think most men in my position would have done too.

I renounced my ingeniously elaborate scheme for ever; I rushed to the door (which was fortunately unbolted and unlocked), and the next moment I was making for the King's Road with an unsteady run, as if the Curse itself were at my heels.

There is little more to say; for weeks I lay in hiding, trembling every hour lest the outraged Curse should hunt me down at last; my belongings were all at Parson's Green, and for obvious reasons I dared not

write or call for them, nor indeed have I seen any of the Catafalques since my ignominious flight.

I had been trapped and cruelly deceived—my hopes of an ample and assured income with a wife I could honestly love are fled for ever—but, although I regret this bitterly and sincerely, I am now resigned, for the price of success was too tremendous.

Perhaps there may be one or two who read this whose curiosity has been excited in the course of my strange and unhappy story, and who may feel a slight disappointment at not learning after all what the Curse's personal appearance is, and how it comports itself in its ghastly Grey Chamber. For myself, I have long ceased to feel any curiosity on the subject, but I can only suggest that full information as to these points would be easily obtained if any unmarried male person of unexceptionable recommendations were to call at Parson's Green and ask Sir Paul's permission to pay his addresses to his daughter.

I shall be very happy to allow my name to be used as a reference.

A San Carlo Superstition.

SEVERAL years ago I considered in the pages of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE, under the title of "A Gambling Superstition," a plan by which some fondly imagine that fortune may be forced, and showed how illusory the scheme really is which at first view appears so promising. I propose now to consider another plan, the fallacy in which cannot be quite so readily seen, though in reality it is as unmistakable, when once the conditions of the problem are duly considered, as in the other.

Let me in the first place briefly run through the reasoning relating to the simpler problem; because the discussion of the other turns in fact on a comparison between the two.

The simple idea for winning constantly at any such game as *rouge et noir* is as follows:—The player stakes the sum which he desires to win, say 1*l.* Either he wins or loses. If he wins he again stakes 1*l.*, having already gained one. If, however, he loses, he stakes 2*l.* If this time he wins, he gains a balance of 1*l.*, and begins again, staking 1*l.*, having already won 1*l.* If, however, he loses the stake of 2*l.*, or 3*l.* in all (for 1*l.* was lost at the first trial), he stakes 4*l.* If he wins at this third trial he is 1*l.* to the good, and begins again, staking 1*l.* after having already won 1*l.* If, however, he loses, he stakes 8*l.* It will readily be seen that by going on in this way the player always wins 1*l.*, when at last the right colour appears. He then, in every case, puts by the 1*l.* gained, and begins again.

It seems then at first as though all the player has to do is to keep on patiently in this way, starting always with some small sum which he desires to win at each trial, doubling the stake after each loss, when he pockets the amount of his first stake and begins again. At each trial the same sum seems certainly to be gained, for he cannot go on losing for ever. So that he may keep on adding pound to pound, *ad infinitum*, or until the "bank" tires of the losing game.

The fallacy consists in the assumption that he cannot always lose. It is true that theoretically a time must always come when the right colour wins. But the player has to keep on doubling his stake practically, not theoretically; and the right colour may not appear till his pockets are cleared. Theoretically, too, it is certain that be the sum at his command ever so large, and the stake the bank allows ever so great, the player will be ruined at last at this game, if—which is always the case—the sum at the command of the bank is very much larger. It would be so even if the bank allowed itself no advantage in the game, whereas we know that there is a certain seemingly small, but in reality decisive,

advantage in favour of the bank at every trial. Apart from this, however, the longest pocket is bound to win in the long run at the game of speculation which I have described. For though it seems a tolerably sure game, it is in reality purely speculative. At every trial there is an enormous probability in favour of the player winning a certain insignificant sum ; but, *per contra*, there is a certain small probability that he will lose, not a small sum, or even a large sum, but all that he possesses—supposing, that is, that he continues the game with steady courage up to that final doubling which closes his gambling career, and also supposing that the bank allows the doubling to continue far enough ; if the bank does not, then the last sum staked within the bank limit is the amount lost by the player, and though he may not be absolutely ruined, he loses at one fell swoop a sum very much larger than that insignificant amount which is all he can win at each trial.

Although this gambling superstition has misled many, yet after all it is easily shown to be a fallacy. It is too simple to mislead any reasonable person long. And indeed, when it has been tried, we find that the unfortunate victim of the delusion very soon wakes to the fact that his stakes increase dangerously fast. When it comes to the fifth or sixth doubling, he is apt to lose heart, fearing that the luck which has gone against him five times in succession may go against him five times more, which would mean that the stake already multiplied 32 times would be increased, not 32 times, but 32 times 32 times, or 1024 times, which would either mean ruin, or a sudden foreclosure on the bank's part, and the collapse of the system.

For the benefit of those who too readily see through a simple scheme such as this, gamblers have invented other devices for their own or others' destruction, devices in which the fallacy underlying all such plans is so carefully hidden that it cannot very readily be detected.

Here, for instance, is a pretty little martingale recently submitted to me by a correspondent of *Knowledge* :—

The gambler first decides on the amount which he is to win at each venture—if that can be called a venture which according to his scheme is to be regarded as an absolute certainty. Let us say that the sum to be won is 10*l*. He divides this up into any convenient number of parts, say three ; and say that the three sums making up 10*l*. are 3*l*., 3*l*., and 4*l*. Then he prepares a card on the annexed plan, where w stands for winnings, L for losses, and M (for martingale) heads the working column which guides the gambler in his successive ventures.

The first part of the play is light and fanciful : the player—whom we will call A—stakes any small sums he pleases until he loses, making no account of any winnings which may precede his first loss. This first loss starts his actual operations. Say the first loss amounts to 2*l*. : A enters this sum in the third column as a loss, and also in the

W	M	L
	£3	
	3	
	4	

second under the cross-line. He then stakes the sum of this number, 2, which is now the lowest in column *M*, and 3, the uppermost—that is, he stakes 5*l*. If he loses, he enters the lost 5*l*. in columns *M* and *L*; and next stakes 8*l*., the sum of the top and bottom figures (3*l*. and 5*l*.) in column *M*. He goes on thus till he wins, when he enters under the head *w* the amount he has won, and scores out in column *M* the top and bottom figures, viz. the 3*l*. (at the top), and the last loss (at the bottom). This process is to be continued, the last stake, if it be lost, being always scored at the bottom of column *M*, as well as in the loss column, the last win being always followed by the scoring out of the top and bottom remaining numbers in column *M*. When this process has continued until all the numbers in column *M* are scored out, *A* will be found to have won 10*l*.: and whatever the sum he had set himself to win in the first instance, so long as it lies well within the tolerably wide limits allowed by the bank, *A* will always win just this sum in each operation.

Let us take a few illustrative cases, for in these matters an abstract description can never be so clear as the account of some actual case.

Consider, then, the accompanying account by *A* of one of these little operations. The amount which *A* sets out to win is, as before, 10*l*.

He divides this up into three parts—3*l*., 3*l*., and 4*l*. He starts with a loss of 2*l*., which he sets in columns *M* and *L*. He stakes next 5*l*. and loses, setting down 5*l*. in columns *M* and *L*. He stakes 8*l*., the sum of the top and bottom numbers in column *M*, and wins. He therefore sets 8*l*. under *w*, and scores out 3*l*. and 5*l*., the top and bottom numbers in column *M*. (The reader should here score out these numbers in pencil.) The top and bottom numbers now remaining are 3*l*. and 2*l*. Therefore *A* stakes now 5*l*. Say he loses. He therefore sets down 5*l*. both in column *M* and column *L*, and stakes

<i>w</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>L</i>
	£3	
	3	
	4	
	2	£2
	5	5
£8	5	5
11	8	8
9	2	2
4		
£32		£22

8*l*., the sum of the top and bottom numbers under *M*. Say he loses again. He therefore puts down 8*l*. under columns *M* and *L*, and stakes 11*l*., the sum of the top and bottom numbers under *M*. Say he wins. He puts down 11*l*. under *w*, and scores out the 3*l*. left at the top and the 8*l*. left at the bottom of the column under *M*. (This the reader should do in pencil.) He then stakes 9*l*., the sum of the top and bottom numbers (4*l*. and 5*l*. respectively) left under *M*. Say he wins again. He then puts down 9*l*. under *w*, and scores out the 4*l*. left at the top and the 5*l*. left at the bottom of the column under *M*. There now remains only one number under *M*, namely 2*l*., and therefore *A* stakes 2*l*. Let us suppose that he loses. He puts down 2*l*. under *M* and *L*, and, following the simple rule, stakes 4*l*. Say he wins. He then puts down 4*l*. under *w*, and scores out 2*l*. and 2*l*., the only two remaining numbers under *M*. *A* therefore now closes his little account, finding himself the winner of 8*l*., 11*l*., 9*l*.,

and 4*l.*, or 32*l.* in all, and the loser of 2*l.*, 5*l.*, 5*l.*, 8*l.*, and 2*l.*, or 22*l.* in all, the balance in his favour being 10*l.*, the sum he set forth to win.

It seems obvious that the repetition of such a process as this any convenient number of times at each sitting must result in putting into A's pocket a considerable number of the sums of money dealt with at each trial. In fact it seems at a first view that here is a means of obtaining untold wealth, or at least of ruining any number of gambling banks.

Again, at a first view, this method seems in all respects an immense improvement on the other which I considered under the title of "A Gambling Superstition." For whereas in that method only a small sum could be gained at each trial, while the sum staked increased after each failure in geometrical progression, in this second method (though it is equally a gambling superstition) a large sum may be gained at each trial, and the stakes only increase in arithmetical progression in each series of failures.

The comparison between the two plans comes out best when we take the sum to be won undivided, when also the system is simpler; and, further, the fallacy which underlies this, like *every* system for gaining money with certainty, is more readily detected.

W	M	L
	£10	
	5	£5
	15	15
	25	25
£35	20	20
25		
15		
£75		£65

Take, then, the sum of 10*l.*, and suppose 5*l.* the first loss, after which take two losses, one gain, one loss, and two gains. The table will be drawn up then as shown,—with the balance of 10*l.*, according to the fatal success of this system.

On the other hand, take the other and simpler method, where we double the original stake after each failure. Then supposing the losses and gains to follow in the same succession as in the case just considered, note that the first gain closes the cycle. The table has the following simple form (counting three losses to begin with):—

W	L
	£10
	20
£80	40
£80	£70

We see then at once the advantage in the simpler plan which counterbalances the chief disadvantage mentioned above. This disadvantage, the rapid increase of the sum staked, is undoubtedly serious; but on the other hand, there is the important advantage that at the first success the sum originally staked is won; whereas, according to the other plan, every failure puts a step between the

player and final success. It can readily be shown that this disadvantage in the less simple plan we are now specially considering just balances the disadvantage in the simple plan we considered first.

But now let us more particularly consider the probabilities for and against the player involved in the plan we are dealing with.

Note in the first place that the player works down the column under *M* from the top and bottom at each success, taking off two figures, and at

each failure adding one figure at the bottom. To get then the number of figures scored out we must double the number of successes; to get the number added we take simply the number of failures, and the total number of sums under m is therefore the original number set under m , increased by the number of failures. He will therefore wipe out, as it were, the whole column, so soon as twice the number of successes either equals or exceeds by one the number of failures (including the first which starts the cycle). Manifestly the former sum will equal the latter, when the last win removes two numbers under m , and will exceed the latter by one when the last win removes only one number under m .

Underlying the belief that this method is a certain way of increasing the gambler's store, there is the assumption that in the long run twice the number of successes will equal the number of failures, together with the number of sums originally placed under m , or with this number increased by unity. And this belief is sound; for according to the doctrine of probabilities, the number of successes—if the chances are originally equal—will in the long run differ from the number of failures by a number which, though it may perchance be great in itself, will certainly be very small compared with the total number of trials. So that twice the number of successes will differ very little relatively from *twice* the number of failures, when both numbers are large; and all that is required for our gambler's success is that twice the number of successes should equal *once* the number of failures, together with a *small* number, viz. the number of sums originally set under m , or this number increased by unity. So that we may say the gambler is practically certain to win in the long run.

In this respect the method we are now considering resembles the gambling superstition before examined. In that case also the gambler is sure to win in the long run, as he requires but a single success to wipe out the losses resulting from any number of failures. He is in that case sure to succeed very much sooner (on the average of a great number of trials) than in the latter.

But we remember that even in that case where success seems so assured, and where success in the long run—*granting the long run*—is absolutely certain, the system steadily followed out means not success but ruin. No matter what the limit which the bank rules may assign to the increase of the stakes, so long as there *is* a limit, and so long as the bank has a practically limitless control of money as compared with the player, he must eventually lose all that he possesses.

So that we must not too hastily assume that because the method we are considering ensures success in the long run, the gambler can win to any extent when the long run is not assured to him. Here lies the fallacy in this, as in all other methods of binding fortune to the gambler's wheel. The player finds that he must win in the long run, and he never stops to inquire what run is actually allowed him. It may be a short run, or a fair run, or even a tolerably long run; but the question for

him is, will it be long enough? And note that it is not only the limitation which the bank may assign to the stakes which we have to consider: the gambler's possessions assign a limit, even though the bank may assign none.

Let us see, then, what prospect there is that in this, as in the other case, a run of bad luck may ruin the player,—or rather, let us see whether it be the case that in this, as in the other system, patient perseverance in the system may not mean certain ruin,—which ruin may indeed arrive at the very beginning of the confident gambler's career.

Instead of all but certainty of success in each single trial which exists in the simpler case, there is in the case we are considering but a high degree of probability. It is very much more likely than not that in a given trial the gambler will clear the stake which he has set himself to win. (This is why we so often hear strong expressions of faith in these systems—again and again we are told with open-mouthed expressions of wonder that these systems must be infallible, because, says the narrator, I saw it tried over and over again, and always with success.) Granted that it is so; indeed, it would be a poor system which did not give the gambler an excellent chance of winning a small stake, in return for the risk, by no means evanescent, that he may lose a very large one.

Observe, now, how the chances for and against are balanced between the two systems. Suppose such a run of ill-luck as in the simpler system would mean absolute defeat, because of the rapid increase (by doubling) of the sum staked by the gambler. Say, for instance, a bank allows no stake to exceed 1,000*l.*, so that ten doublings of a stake of 1*l.*, raising the stake to 1024*l.*, would compel the gambler to stop, and leave him with all his accumulated losses, amounting to 1,023*l.* Now, take the case of a gambler trying the other system for a gain of 10*l.*, divided into three sums, 3*l.*, 3*l.*, and 4*l.* under column *m*, and suppose that after winning a number of times he unfortunately starts ten defeats in succession, his first loss having been 3*l.*; then his second loss was 6*l.*, the third 9*l.*, the fourth 12*l.*, and so on, the tenth being 30*l.* His total loss up to this point amounts only to 165*l.*; and is therefore much less serious than his loss would have been had he begun by staking 1*l.* and doubled that sum nine times, losing ten times in all. Moreover, his next stake, according to the system, is only 33*l.*, which is well within the supposed limit of the bank. But on the other hand, to carry on the system, he now has to go on until he has cleared off all the thirteen sums in the column under *m*. To do this the gambler has to run the risk of several further runs of ill-luck against him, and it is by no means necessary that these should be long runs of luck for the score against him to become very heavy. Be it noticed that at every win he scores off only a small portion of the balance against him, while every run of luck against him adds to that score heavily. And notice, moreover, that while on this system he does not quickly

approach the limit which the bank may assign to stakes, he much more quickly encroaches on his own capital—a circumstance which is quite as seriously opposed to his chance of eventual success as the finality of the bank limit. So far as the carrying out of his system is concerned, it matters little whether he is obliged to stop the play on the system because his pockets are emptied, or because the bank will not allow him further to increase his stake.

Again, observe what an irony underlies the gambler's faith in this system. When he starts with the hope of winning say 10%, he is perhaps to some degree doubtful; but he goes on until perhaps he is at such a stage that if he stopped he would be the loser of fifty or sixty pounds. Yet such is his confidence in his system that, although at this stage he is in a very much worse position than at the beginning, the mere circumstance that he is working out a system encourages him to persevere. And so he continues until the time comes—as with due patience and perseverance it inevitably must—when either the bank limit is reached, or his pockets are emptied. In one case he has to begin again with a deficit against him much larger than any gain he has probably made before; in the second he has the pleasant satisfaction of noting, perhaps, that if he had been able to go on a little longer, fortune would (from his point of view) have changed. Though as a matter of fact, whether he had had a few hundreds of pounds more or not only affects his fortunes in putting off a little more the inevitable day when the system fails and he is ruined.

The Brethren of Deventer.

ROUND- and red-cheeked little boys and girls were chanting their vowel-sounds in the school-house on St. Agnes' Mount, near Zwolle, when we made our pilgrimage to the resting-place of Thomas a Kempis, the historian of the Deventer Brotherhood, of whose piety he was himself the choicest flower. At Deventer, we found the inevitable Calvinistic white-wash, relieved only by one or two irrepressible fragments of fresco, effacing the noble lines of St. Lebuin's, the vast church in which Thomas a Kempis' spiritual father, the venerable Florentius, was wont to pour forth his simple eloquence. And of Gerard Groot himself, the original founder of the fraternity which has made the name of the busy Overijssel town illustrious, the memory might have seemed altogether to have fled its streets and places, but for a whole suburb of benevolent foundations, spreading themselves out with more than ordinary Dutch amplitude, and garnished everywhere with those bright bits of flower-garden which in the Netherlands no *Béguinage* is too ancient, and no pensioner is too poor, to maintain.

And yet not only the stillness which has laid itself like the veil of evening upon the remote graveyard, but the busy activity too, which continues its week-day hum round church and almshouses, harmonises with the reminiscences of which these localities are full. There are more ways than one, as a mystic visionary of the twelfth century tells us, leading heavenward; but both the hyacinthine path of contemplation and the green path of active life were trodden by the men to whom Deventer and the foundations branching out from it were at once places of retreat and scenes of active labour. To the influence which the movement begun in these regions exercised upon the course of the Renaissance in the fifteenth century Germanic Europe owed something besides traditions of self-denying beneficence and examples of unworldly piety. On the one hand, it is certain that the Deventer Brotherhood, or one or more of the institutions of which it was the parent, gave their moral and intellectual nurture to men who may without any misuse of a most misused term be reckoned among the precursors of the Lutheran Reformation. And, on the other, it was here that were also educated some of the most illustrious representatives of that great, and in its failure most pathetic, movement of the Renaissance age, the endeavour to reform the Church from within. Among the precursors of Luther may, in all probability, be reckoned John Pupper, called John of Goch, and, without any doubt whatever, the famous *magister contradictionum*, John Wessel. John

of Goch, although during his lifetime he gave no offence to the authorities of the existing Church, was in truth radically, if unconsciously, opposed to her system and its fruits; so that in due time his works were prohibited by the Council of Trent, after nearly a century had passed since their author had peacefully died in the house of the good sisters at Tabor, outside the walls of monkish Mecheln. John Wessel, some of whose earlier as well as later days were spent with the clericals of the Common Life at Zwolle, was of a more high-mettled nature; and, in his own apprehension at least, very nearly became a martyr to opinions which Luther afterwards declared substantially identical with his own. Wessel, however, was saved by powerful protection from the flames to which he refers, either in a literal or in a metaphorical sense; and he died at peace in his native town of Gröningen, after overcoming deep religious doubts almost at the very last. Better known to general fame are two pupils of Deventer on whose orthodoxy no breath of suspicion has ever rested. The earlier of these, who was likewise a munificent benefactor of the institution to which he owed his youthful training, as well as an active promoter of the spread of its system, was Cardinal Cusanus (of Cues on the Mosel). The author of the *De concordantiâ catholicâ* was not more surely identified with the reactionary policy which strove to reduce or undo the effects of the concessions made by the Papacy at the Council at Basel, than with the endeavour to revive and spiritualise the life of the Church whose constitution that Council had sought to resettle. Cardinal Cusanus' visitation of Germany was an arduous and long-sustained endeavour to purify and reinvigorate one great national branch of the Christian Church; and when he afterwards proposed to his friend Pope Pius II. (*Æneas Sylvius*), a visitation and reform of the College of Cardinals itself, it was clear that his projects addressed themselves to the root as well as to the branches. An even more widely remembered son of Deventer is that truly venerable figure among the Roman Pontiffs, whose name has received no less lustre from his failure than the names of many of his predecessors have from their success. It is true that, as a teacher and a man of learning, Pope Adrian VI. is to be reckoned among the adherents of scholasticism rather than among the humanists; indeed, he was "wont to despise the flowers of the more elaborate kind of eloquence and the amenities of the poets." But he had learnt other lessons besides those of the schoolmen, though unfortunately the art of government had not been included among them; and when amidst the execrations of corrupt Rome he had taken his seat in the chair of St. Peter, the "old pedant" offered to the Church over which he presided an example of moral courage surpassed by no other in her history. And yet neither in the conscientiousness of John Wessel as a religious thinker, nor in that of Pope Adrian VI. as a religious reformer, is the full spirit of the Brotherhood, its peculiar genius (if I may so express myself), most strikingly apparent. Its most characteristic product is after all to be sought in the life and labours of the master-scholar of the Germanic

Renascence. Zealots, who hold that a law is binding upon honest men in all quarrels, whether political or ecclesiastical, to choose one of two sides, will doubtless continue to impugn the consistency and single-mindedness of Erasmus; but those who believe him to have been distinguished by these qualities, will also incline to think that he was animated and steadied for the efforts of his maturity by the training of his youth. It cannot be denied that he lived to attack with contemptuous ire the brethren's schools, in one of which he had himself received his early education; but his invective refers only to the period of their stagnation and decline. And it is worth noting by the way as an illustration of the looseness of treatment which has too often been the fate of Erasmus, that one of the best-known accounts of the Brotherhoods makes him complain "of having himself wasted two years in one of their institutions," whereas (as I will show a little further on), it is not of himself that he is speaking at all in the passage cited.

It need hardly be said that the name of Erasmus is far from being the only one illustrious in the history of learning and letters which connects the annals of the Deventer and Zwolle Fraternities with the general course of the Renascence movement. The story, to be sure, according to which Thomas a Kempis sent three of his pupils from Deventer to Italy, and thus directly prepared the revival of classical studies in the Low Countries and the neighbouring parts of the Empire, will not bear examination; but it is all the same incontestable that the Brethren's schools were of the utmost assistance in fostering that exact study of the classical languages which was to receive a more vigorous impulse, when Agricola and other pioneers of humanism returned from Italy intent upon raising the literary fame of their "barbarous" native land. From the teaching at Deventer of Alexander Hegius more especially (though he did not stand alone), there issued forth not only a long line of more or less celebrated scholars, but also some who were themselves in their turn to become centres of academical or literary influence. Such—not to speak again of Erasmus himself—was Conrad Mutianus, the wise and refined Canon of Gotha, and the glory, in its happier days, of the neighbouring University of Erfurt, then (in the earlier years of the sixteenth century) the foremost of the universities in the Empire that favoured the New Learning. Besides him, there came from Deventer at least one of the many who have been credited with a share in the authorship of the famous Dunciad of the Scholastics, the *Epistola Obscurorum Virorum*. This was the celebrated Hermann von dem Busche, who is aptly described by Strauss as "the missionary of humanism," and who suffered, as well as bestowed, many a buffet for the good cause. Not less certain is the connection, as a pupil of Hegius, with Deventer of an unlucky scholar whose doom it has been to be remembered by an amused posterity as one of the most prominent *victims* of the same immortal satire. And yet this at least may be said on behalf of Magister Ortuinus Gratius (Ortuin de Graes): first, that he seems to have been

quite as heartily devoted to learning as most of his opponents; and, again, that his later conduct shows him to have been gifted with an instinct which has been denied to many far more excellent scholars—the instinct of knowing when he had put himself in the wrong. Two other names only shall here be mentioned as illustrating the widespread and various influence of the “Daventrian” training, because they form a most important link between this early or introductory chapter in the history of the German Renaissance, and its subsequent growth. At Deventer was trained, some time in the second quarter of the fifteenth century, the Westphalian Ludwig Dringenberg, whose own school at Schlettstadt became a main lever of the Renaissance movement in Elsass; and through the efforts of the famous Wimpfeling and others the means of opening a new era in the educational history of Germany. Not the least interesting feature in his system of teaching is its popular element, which recalls the circumstances of his schooling: he made his pupils learn German rhymes about the national history, which was an advance upon the Latin rhymes in the scholastic grammars about verbs and substantives. Another Westphalian educated at Deventer, was Rudolph von Langen, who brought from Italy the accomplishment of Latin verse composition, or “poetry,” as it was then called; and after becoming a member of the Cathedral body at Münster raised the schools of Westphalia, and its intellectual life in general, to an unprecedented stage of activity. The influence of seminaries founded in adjoining parts of Germany by Deventrians or their disciples must have operated in the same direction. And thus, while the universities in the main continued for a long time to cherish and defend the scholastic method of instruction, its overthrow was already in course of accomplishment by means of the unpretending schools which were the creations of the simple piety of a few humble men.

Such are a few of the more prominent instances of the influence exercised by these institutions. If, after all, what is most deeply interesting in their history seems to shrink away from the touch of inquiry, this is only too easily accounted for. In the lives of institutions, as in those of individual men and women, it is the period of aspiration which has the greatest charm; but how difficult, at times how impossible, it is for the observer to catch and reproduce this bloom of youth!

The foundation of the earliest Brotherhood of the Common Life can hardly be dated before the last quarter of the fourteenth century; but, like all institutions which have satisfied a real need in the life of their age, this was not a sudden growth, still less the invention of a single mind. The Netherlands, which at this time had not yet reached the full height of their prosperity, were more and more shaking off the predominance of their nobility; while at no stage of their history has the part played by the clergy in the life of the people been more insignificant. These well-known circumstances—which here as elsewhere betokened the approach of new times with new ideas both political and

religious—explain two curious facts bearing on the present subject. In the first place, a considerable number of schools had been founded in the Dutch towns during the course of the fourteenth century, but these schools were commercial speculations rather than endowed seminaries of piety and learning. Again, the popular religious movements that had up to this time occurred in the Netherlands had on the whole had but little connection with the established organisation of the Church. The country was, as is well-known, during the whole of the Middle Ages, a favourite home of those tendencies of religious thought and feeling which are commonly classed together under the rather vague name of Mysticism; and equally familiar to the soil of these regions, nor less persistently long-lived, were those associations at which the Church looked askance, until at last she accorded them more or less qualified sanction. By the side of the Béguines and Beghards and Lollards—the true ancestors, from one point of view, of the Brethren of the Common Life—there had sprung up other associations with more or less doubtful and dangerous tenets and usages; and it was inevitable that (just as in England in Wiclif's later days) an indolent public should confound the sowers of corn with the scatterers of cockle. Moreover, owing to the slightness of the attention as yet paid by the people at large to clerical theology, no signs had yet appeared of any recalcitrance against any part of the Roman system of dogma. Notwithstanding the lively commercial intercourse between England and Flanders, the teachings of Wiclif failed to penetrate among the burghers of the Flemish and Dutch towns—as, for that matter, those of Hus were likewise to fail to do in the next generation.

Blind to her opportunities as well as to her dangers, the Church had allowed these longings and gaspings after a truer and fuller religious life to lose themselves in extravagance and ecstasism, though we may rest assured that a purer flame had continued to burn in many a remote cell and humble home unremembered in history. For us, however, Mysticism as it appears in the Netherlands finds its first articulate expression in John Rusbroek, the venerable prior of Groenendal, near Brussels. Rusbroek was long after his death denounced as heretical by the great Gerson; but his fame in life was that of a chosen depository of the counsels and consolations of Divine wisdom and love. He had consecrated himself to God—and had to others seemed so consecrated—even before he had taken holy orders. When as a young man he was on one occasion walking through the streets of Brussels, two "men of the world" passed him on his way. "Would that I," exclaimed one of these, struck by his appearance, "had a sanctity of life such as this priest's." "Not for all the gold in the world," the other "riotour" (as Chaucer would have called him) made answer, "for in that case I should never again know what it is to have a good day." "Alas, poor man," thought Rusbroek to himself, "how little thou knowest the sweetness which those feel within them who taste the Spirit of God." Here we have the very essence of the mystic conception of religious life; but neither was there

wanting in Rusbroek the practical simplicity which was to be inherited from him by the disciples of his teaching. Thus he was anxious to expose the impostures of pretended ecstasies, and was specially successful in making clear the real nature of the "freedom of the spirit and seraphic love" inculcated by a too popular Sister at Brussels. Rusbroek cannot in any sense be called a Reformer, and the question as to the measure of originality traceable in his religious conceptions must be passed over here. But the significance of his personality and teachings for that chapter of religious history with which we are more particularly concerned, is that they pointed the way which was actually taken by the man who made mysticism a practical and popular influence, and who thus became the author of a movement destined to make itself felt throughout his native land, and far beyond its boundaries.

As the fourteenth century began to draw towards its close, the Christian world might feel that it had for some time had enough of lamentations about the state of this world, however eloquent, sincere, and well-founded. But grievances, as we know, are a plant slowly ripening towards redress. There is a vast difference between the *Miserere's* of the *Vision of Piers Plowman* and the polemical protests of Wiclif; and the step is considerable even from the complaints of Rusbroek to the remedial action begun by Gerard Groot. The personal history of the latter, so far as it lies open to us, is that of numberless agents of enthusiasm, from Ignatius Loyola down to many an evangelical light of these latter days. He was the son of well-born and wealthy parents; and the fact that his father, who was burgomaster of Deventer, intended him for the Church, enabling him to prepare himself for Orders by an early academical course at Paris, may have been due to the weakly health of the boy. After continuing his studies, and at the same time beginning his efforts as a teacher, at Cologne, he seemed likely, some agreeable preferments having fallen to his lot, to become what Chaucer might have called an "idle chanon." If there is one thing more pathetic than the religious aspirations of this age, it is its scientific gropings; and Gerard Groot, like so many mediæval students and inquirers, was reputed an adept in astrology and necromancy, albeit he eagerly protested that he had never studied to his own damnation. But, though the habits of reading and writing seem afterwards to have clung to him, as it were, in spite of himself, there can be no doubt that at the critical point of his career he was seized by a strong revulsion against the special temptations incident to his mode of life. He resigned his two canonries; he denounced the hollow delusion of university degrees; and he proscribed the twin vanities of disputations and literary authorship. Most fortunately, his genuine love of books, and his charitable goodwill towards learners, prevented him to the last from carrying his Puritanic principles to their logical consequences; and his library survived him as a cherished inheritance of his famous foundation.

Thus Gerard Groot passed through that great change in the concep-

tion of the task and duties of human life which perhaps more men undergo than care to call it by a technical term of religious import. The peculiarity—though of course no unique peculiarity—of his conduct was that he at once and completely translated his convictions into action. He not only, as has been said, gave up his preferments and burnt his vain “mathematical” books, but he also renounced whatever property belonging to him was not either absolutely necessary for his sustenance, or capable of being devoted to pious purposes. After a three years’ period of preparation in a monastic retreat, he took deacon’s orders, and began his labours as a missionary preacher under the licence of the Bishop of Utrecht. As is so often the case with men whose careers have resembled his, humility was in him coupled with a strange self-confidence. “Not for a hat full of gold guilders,” so he told the parson of Zwolle, “would he be himself parson of Zwolle even for the space of a single night;” yet he preached without fear or faltering before rich and poor, learned and lewd, through the length and breadth of the Northern Provinces, most frequently, it would seem, at St. Mary’s in Deventer itself. Nor was his courage fair-weather courage only, or his humility of the unbending kind not unusual in popular preachers. For when at last (as it would seem, not without the co-operation of the jealousy of the Mendicant Friars) an episcopal prohibition arrested his preaching, he first straightforwardly deprecated the justice, and then unreservedly acknowledged and obeyed the authority, of the ordinance.

But the institutions founded by Groot during the period of his activity as a preacher were not to come to an end with it. He was and is rightly venerated as their founder, although in his lifetime they never passed beyond an initial stage. There seems to be some uncertainty as to questions of dates and priority; but it may be concluded that the earliest foundation presenting the distinctive features of a Brotherhood of the Common Life was established by Groot at Deventer itself, before a similar institution was opened at Zwolle. The inspiring example of the holy tranquillity of the life led by Rusbroek and his brother canons at Groenendal had suggested to Groot to aim at a similar result in Deventer. But he was still a comparatively young man, indisposed for a mere withdrawal into the cloister, fully awake to the shortcomings and failings of the existing Monastic Orders, and prevented by the jealous arm of authority from the performance of pastoral duties. Silenced as a preacher, he began to attach to himself personally young men and lads in his native town, and more especially scholars in its Latin School, whom he induced to copy the Scriptures and certain of the Fathers for him, and, while remunerating them for their work, thus brought under the influence of his conversation and counsel. After this fashion he *from the very first* connected the pursuit of learning with religious thoughts and ways. Very soon an ardent disciple of Groot, afterwards his successor in the direction of the Brotherhoods, Florentius, the son of Radevyn (Floris Radevynzoon), suggested that he and the copyists should

club their weekly earnings into a common fund, and from its proceeds lead a *common life*. After some hesitation (owing to fear of the jealousy of the Mendicant Orders), Groot accorded his sanction, and the plan was carried into execution, in the first instance in the house of Florentius himself. Thus from the outset the characteristic mark of the association, the rule, so to speak, distinguishing it from the mendicant bodies, was that it supported itself, so far as possible, not by alms but by labour. Groot lived to see another Brotherhood established at Zwolle, while he gave up his own paternal house at Deventer to a Sisterhood established there on somewhat similar principles, and superintended by himself. But his wish (which proves how far he was from assuming a hostile attitude towards the monastic system in general) to found a society of Regular Canons in connection with his Brotherhoods, and forming as it were their natural apex, was only accomplished by his successor. In 1384 he caught the plague from a friend whom he was nursing at Deventer, and died shortly afterwards, on the feast of St. Bernard. "St. Augustine and St. Bernard," he had told his distressed friends, "are knocking at the gate."

His work was carried on by the real organiser as well as originator of the Brotherhoods, Florentius, the son of a prosperous citizen of Leerdam, in South Holland. To him Thomas a Kempis does no more than justice when he proposes, "after presenting in Master Gerard the good fruitful tree from whom our pious life took its beginning, to bring before you in his disciple, the pious Florentius, a glorious sweet-smelling blossom of that tree." Florentius, like Gerard, lived to no advanced age, but during the sixteen years for which he survived his revered master their joint creation had grown in an extraordinary degree. He was, more emphatically than Gerard Groot, a man of action rather than of books; he proclaimed his abhorrence of dead scholastic knowledge ("the Devil," he points out, "knows a great deal of the Scriptures, and yet it avails him nothing"); and he was himself so little of an expert in the art of writing that he contributed his own share of productive labour as a binder rather than as a transcriber of manuscripts. On the other hand, his eloquence in the pulpit can in no way have fallen short of his master's, in enthusiastic sympathy with whom Florentius had begun by exchanging a comfortable canonry at Utrecht for the laborious post of vicar at St. Lebuin's, in Deventer. Thus he was marked out for his task. Under his rule, not only was the Deventer Brotherhood enlarged and rehoused, but at Zwolle too, where the famous schoolmaster Cele, an old associate of Groot's, gathered many hundreds of pupils around him, a second house was opened, and in other towns also the same species of institution began gradually to spring up. Meanwhile, Florentius had further succeeded in carrying out his friend's cherished wish of establishing a monastic foundation of regular canons; indeed, before his death he had established two, the first at Windesem, near Zwolle, the second in the more immediate vicinity of that town, on the hill of St. Agnes.

With the death of Florentius the first period in the history of the Brotherhoods may be said to close; or, in other words, by that time the period of a steady and continuous growth had fairly set in. It is of the earlier time that so touching a series of reminiscences have been preserved by Thomas a Kempis (whose fees as a scholar at Deventer the good Florentius generously offered to defray; but the schoolmaster, hearing who intended to pay them, would not accept them when Thomas came with them to redeem the book he had—in accordance with a common custom—left in pledge). Thus we are enabled to realise to ourselves the figures of the chief among the brethren who surrounded their beloved chief, and followed the “praiseworthy usages” devised by him, until these gradually fixed themselves as the statutes of the community. At first there had been only one ordained ecclesiastic among them besides the founder; but gradually others of the brethren, after undergoing a conscientious preparation, took orders. Several of these were men of good birth and fortune; but any such distinctions were merged in the humility and self-sacrifice of all. Not only property was common, but labour; for the brethren shared among one another a variety of industrial and menial tasks and occupations, without thinking any burdensome or contemptible. Still, some functions were permanently assigned to particular brethren, and perhaps the most typical representatives of the moral and intellectual significance of the association were the two brethren who served it respectively in the capacities of cook and of librarian. John Kakabus the cook, commonly called “Ketel,” in playful allusion to his functions, had formerly been a merchant at Dort, till an irresistible impulse had caused him to become, first a scholar at Deventer, and then a member of the Brotherhood. It was his own prayer that he might serve the brethren’s house in the humble office which he was appointed to fill; and though he had not contrived to muster enough learning to understand the Latin read aloud at meals, he performed his menial labours in no menial spirit. While his hands were busy over his pots, his voice went up in psalms of praise; and thus his kitchen (where the brethren, including Florentius himself, had week by week to take their turn as helpers) resembled a chamber of prayer. He never wearied of doing good to the poor; for he had utterly cast off regard for the things of this world. “We read,” he said, “in the Gospel, ‘Blessed are the poor in spirit;’ but nowhere do we read, ‘Blessed are the Masters of Arts.’” Still more interesting, because exemplifying that union between love of knowledge and active piety which lies at the root of the system of the Deventer Brotherhood, is the character, as handed down to us, of its librarian, Gerard Zerboid of Zütphen. He was a born student, seemingly absorbed in his books, indifferent to the advantages of air and exercise, and absolutely indifferent to his dinner. But he was in truth very far from being a mere bookworm. A true friend of knowledge, he not only contrived to augment the collection of books bequeathed to the Brotherhood by its founder, but provided for

their use even by readers at a distance. Nor was his own learning of the useless sort. Well seen in the law, he became the trusted man of business of the fraternity, as well as its literary champion. He successfully defended it against the monkish insinuation that it was an "unlawful conventicle"; and he sustained in excellent Latin the thesis—for the truth of which he adduced fifteen reasons—that it is profitable to read Holy Scripture in the vulgar tongue.

Such as these were the associates who dwelt with Florentius in the house called after his name at Deventer. It continued from first to last (so far as appears) to be acknowledged as the parent and central institution of the whole system of Brotherhoods, and its head or rector held an honorary primacy among the rectors or priors of the several houses, who seem, in later times at all events, to have periodically met for purposes of conference. Nor is there any reason to doubt that the younger brethren's houses, in the main, followed the example of the Florentius house in their constitution and ways of life. It was usual for a brethren's house to be inhabited by at least four priests, and about twice as many clerks (*clerici*), the score or so of persons included in the establishment being completed by 'laymen' and 'novices.' The clerks were the ordinary brethren, corresponding to monks in a convent; but, unlike these, bound by no vows, and at liberty to depart after paying a certain sum of money. The laymen were those who, by their own desire, shared for a time in the common life. As for the novices, it need only be said that it was against the principles of the Brotherhood to court or solicit additions to their numbers (though, if Erasmus is to be trusted, in this respect also things were afterwards to change). Among the members of the communities as little of formality as possible seems to have been required. There were no officers except the rector and his substitute, and functionaries charged with the performance of certain necessary duties; while in the matter of dress, nothing but an "excessive simplicity" of grey coat, overcoat, and cowl seems to have distinguished the brethren from other wearers of frieze. But their main distinction, after all, lay rather in their occupations than in the forms of their life. Sensible as they necessarily were to the uses of preaching and prayer, yet they had not renounced an active life in abandoning a worldly one. "So long," says the author of the *Imitatio*, "as thou art in the flesh, thou oughtest oftentimes to bewail the burden of the flesh; for thou canst not without intermission engage in spiritual exercises and divine contemplation. At these times it is expedient for thee to betake thyself to lowly works in the outer world, and to recreate thyself in good actions." It has been seen how Thomas a Kempis devoted a separate biographical sketch to the merits of a brother *qui coquus fuit*; and at St. Agnes' he cheerfully undertook himself the almost equally "mechanical" duties of a steward. Frequently the brethren practised handicrafts; and indeed, as was perhaps inevitable, in some fraternities the industrial spirit gained the mastery to such an extent as to convert them into

something not very unlike co-operative societies. But the chief and favourite pursuits, of course, continued to be those of education and literature; for it was not forgotten that the origin of the Brotherhoods had been an endeavour to furnish young scholars with the means for carrying on their studies, by encouraging and promoting on their part the *transcription of books*.

As was natural enough among simple men at a time when book-learning partook not a little of the nature of a luxury, there was among the brethren considerable searching of heart as to the righteousness of the spread of books in general. Fortunately the good founder, though objecting in principle to most of the *trivium* and *quadrivium* as to sheer waste of time, had also been a genuine lover of books, of which he could not help avowing himself "avaricious, nay, over-avaricious." Not less fortunately he had been indifferent (except in the case of Bibles and service-books) to the mere exterior of the copies which he so assiduously collected, thus giving the *tone*, so to speak, to the literary efforts of the brethren, whose object was rather to transcribe large numbers of books, and distribute them freely (often even gratuitously), than to shine as artistic copyists in the eyes of bibliophiles such as the spectacled collector of "unprofitable books" in the *Ship of Fools*. The German Reformation, and, it may be added, the advance of learning and research in Germany, owe much to this early zeal for the cheap diffusion of good literature. Groot's successor, as has been seen, was no scholar by taste or training; while a brother of simple soul, like Ketel the cook, when asked on his deathbed in what ways the Brotherhood in his opinion needed improvement, made answer that for one thing they had too many books, and would do well to sell such as were superfluous for the good of the poor. But the genius of the institution prevailed over such misgivings, with which, I need hardly say, should not be confounded the repeated warnings of Thomas a Kempis against the self-sufficiency of learning, whether sacred or profane. Many of the brethren attained to considerable mechanical skill as copyists, among them pre-eminently Thomas himself, whose transcripts of the Bible (in four volumes) and of passages from St. Bernard remain to attest his willingness to practise what he so eloquently preached: "If he shall not lose his reward who gives a cup of cold water to his thirsty neighbour, what will not be the reward of those who by putting approved works into the hands of their neighbours open to them the foundations of eternal life?" Thus the brethren were of direct and substantial service to the preservation and spread of the most important materials of religious study and of choice monuments of religious devotion. They continued to be of use in the same direction when (at a rather later date) they, in a few instances, took advantage of the new art of printing. The Brotherhood founded at Brussels about the year 1469 was soon afterwards busily engaged in the management of a printing-press; and two small societies in the neigh-

bourhood of Mainz boasted of practising Guttemberg's art with the aid of his own instruments.

But while the copying of books was neither in principle nor in practice carried on in the Brotherhoods as a labour pursued on its own account, the work of *education* had from the first been an integral part and an essential function of their common life. Not all the Brotherhoods had as a matter of course schools of their own—even at Deventer such was not the case at first; but even where the existing school had not been set up by the brethren, they boarded and lodged its pupils, or paid the fees of the poorer among them (the distinction between poor and rich scholars runs through the whole educational life of the Middle Ages), or supplied the school with books, or even with teachers. As a rule, however, every brethren's house provided, at least for its own inmates, instruction in reading, writing, singing, and the Latin tongue, together with that all-pervading influence of a *common life* in which wise judges have at all times recognised an invaluable moral and disciplinary aid to education. The efforts of the brethren called into life throughout the Netherlands an active educational spirit which has never since deserted the country. Statistics are generally suspicious; and we may decline to be overcome by the statement that Cele's school at Zwolle, early in the fifteenth century, sometimes numbered nearly 1,000, and the school at Herzogenbusch even 1,200 pupils. But these figures at least testify to the wide diffusion of the elements of literary culture, and go some way towards explaining such accounts as that given in the next century of Amersfoort, where Latin was to be everywhere heard, even from the lips of the lowly, and Greek also was understood by the better-educated among the merchants. The services of the Brotherhoods to the intellectual progress of Europe were not, however, confined to the improving and supplementing of the schools in one particular country. They played a humble but important part in the great intellectual achievement of the age preceding that of the Reformation—the overthrow of scholasticism.

The Artists' Faculty in a mediæval university was little more than a grammar-school writ large, in which boys were grounded in the rudiments of the Latin grammar with the aid of immutably established handbooks. Foremost among these was the Latin grammar—*i.e.* the series of grammatical rules in rhyme—composed by Alexander de Villa Dei some time before his death in 1209, a book which had received the sanction of the Church, and thus reigned omnipotent in the schools of Europe during the better part of three centuries. It was standard authorities of this description which the more intelligent and simple teaching encouraged by the brethren overthrew, or at least subjected to a long-needed revision. The most famous of the teachers at Deventer was no doubt Alexander Hegius (of Heck, in Westphalia), who died near the close of the fifteenth century, as rector of the Latin school of the town, leaving nothing behind him but his clothes and his books, and

among whose pupils a greater number of eminent men chose to reckon themselves than had actually sat on the benches under him. Together with him, and distinguished like him by both piety and scholarship, worked John Sintius (Syntheim), who was actually a member of the Brotherhood of the Common Life. It was he who daringly, and yet successfully, revised the famous *Doctrinale Puerorum* of Alexander de Villa Dei, and thereby rendered a signal service to education in the Netherlands and in Germany. (In educational, as in other reforms, it is usually the first step which costs the most trouble; nor was it so very long before one of the Obscure Ones was to be found lamenting the good old times of the universities, when the *Partes Alexandri* and the *Dicta Ioannis Sinthenii* together were indispensable in a grammatical student's literary luggage.) Other of the Deventer brethren followed the example of Sinthius, and the intelligent teaching of the Latin grammar was afterwards similarly cherished in the brethren's establishments elsewhere. The accomplished "Ciceronian" Ascensius (of Asche, near Brussels), the friend of Erasmus and editor of Thomas a Kempis, declared himself deeply indebted to the teaching of the "Hieronymians" of Ghent, a fraternity of the Common Life established there early in the fifteenth century. At Herzogenbusch, Gerard Cannyfius composed a new *Latin Grammar*; at Gröningen, Hermann Forrentinus was author of another, which went so far in the direction of simplifying instruction as to involve its author in a charge of heresy. The Brotherhoods may thus be said to have assumed the attitude of reformers in the matter of classical studies, and to have helped to cut the ground from under the old scholastic training, which had treated the Latin tongue merely as an instrument for its own purposes, a "sermo" (to quote the Prologus to the *Leipzig Manuale Scholarium*) "in quem omnes doctrinæ sunt translate." Yet, at the same time, as became their popular origin and character, these institutions cherished the use and even the study of the vulgar tongue, and encouraged the reading of the Bible and the use of the service-books in it, thus stimulating an educational movement which elsewhere (in Elsass) was to lead to results of national significance. The study of history, too, which was to be so vigorously prosecuted at Strassburg, was not altogether overlooked in the Netherlands; and perhaps, in these days of encyclopædias, some additional respect should be paid to the memory of the already mentioned Forrentinus, reputed the earliest compiler of a historical dictionary.

Thus already, in their early days, the Brotherhoods prepared and facilitated the entrance of Germany into the general current of the Renascence; and, at the same time, their influence impressed upon the German Renascence in particular, from its very beginning, its distinctive mark of seriousness and of association with religious studies and religious life. For the brethren never forgot what had been the primary purpose of the institution to which they belonged, and the guiding principle of the life of their founder. They could not depend on any teach-

ing, however good and sound, as on the one effective agency towards the end they had in view. "I am He," says the Divine Voice in the *Imitatio*, "who in an instant elevate a humble mind to comprehend more reasons of eternal truth than if a man had studied ten years in the schools." Accordingly, while cherishing the art of preaching in its amplest form (one has some difficulty in realising, even in connection with Dutch pews, sermons extending over three or—with a pause in the middle—over six hours), they also attached much importance to popular afternoon addresses in the vulgar tongue, which were called *collations*. Carrying out in these different directions the purpose of their establishment, the Brotherhoods by their example, and occasionally even by their direct influence, contributed largely to the reformation of the existing religious orders, of whom, notwithstanding their own modest protests, they were in truth the natural competitors.

The jealousy and ill-will of the Regulars had been naturally excited against the brethren even in their early days, as they were in England against Wiclif's Simple Priests. Already in the lifetime of Gerard Groot, a mendicant monk was (according to Thomas a Kempis) prevented only by Divine interposition—he died on the way—from calumniating at Rome the "man of God" whom he was bent upon ruining. Soon afterwards the Town Council of Kampen, the beautiful city on the Zuyder-Zee, expelled the friends of Groot who had opened an institution of the Common Life there. Graver troubles seemed to threaten, as the advance and increase of the Brotherhoods began seriously to affect the popularity and the profits of the Mendicants. A Dominican named Matthew Grabow formulated the charges against the brethren in a controversial volume, accusing them of mortal sin as having without monastic vows combined in monastic associations, and with scholastic exuberance further indicting them as murderers by implication and palpable false prophets. The Bishop of Utrecht having declined to listen to the charge, its author soon repeated it on what seemed the promising occasion of the great Council of Constance. But the representatives sent to Constance by the Deventer and Zwolle Brotherhoods, and by the Regular Canons of Windesem, were not destined to share the fate of Hus and Jerome. Their cause, which may be described as that of the permissibility of a Regular Religious life outside the established Orders, was eloquently pleaded by the great Paris Chancellor Gerson, whose party contributed so much to the doom of the Bohemian Reformers. Grabow had to recant, and his book was cast into the flames as heretical. The Deventer brethren a few years afterwards repaid this recognition of their orthodoxy by taking the part of Pope Martin V. in a conflict concerning the appointment to the See of Utrecht, in consequence of which an interdiction had been proclaimed over the recalcitrant portions of the diocese, and more especially over the towns of Overijssel. The result was the emigration of the brethren to Zutphen, whence they did not return till after six years of exile and suffering, another Papal bull (of Eugenius IV.,

in 1431) warning all authorities, spiritual or lay, against disturbing the brethren's pious and beneficent activity.

The half century which followed was that of the most vigorous advance of the institution. Its settlements were to be found spreading from Holland and Friesland to Flanders and Brabant, and even extending beyond the Netherlands into Rhenish Germany; and, more sparsely, into other parts of the empire. But these remoter foundations were mostly of later date and inferior importance, nor was it more than a pleasant form when (at Cologne in 1475) the Emperor Frederick III. appointed the brethren his and his successors' vicars and chaplains for ever. Perhaps, on the other hand, something of the spiritual influence exercised by the brethren in that part of the Netherlands where they were most numerous, may be accounted for by the exceptional need which in this period arose for its exercise. From 1456 to 1496 the see of Utrecht was held by David of Burgundy (the half-brother of Charles the Bold), who was said to have done only one good deed during the whole course of his episcopate. Already, however, in this second period the institution of the Brotherhoods was—in accordance with an almost inevitable law—tending to merge itself in the general monastic system of the Church of Rome. It has been noticed how, so soon as two years after the death of Groot, a monastery of Regular Canons in connection with the Brotherhood of the Common Life, and following the rule of St. Augustine, had been established at Windesem, near Zwolle, and how not long afterwards a second convent of the very simplest kind had been opened on Mount St. Agnes, a little height pleasantly rising out of the "bush" near the same city, and watered at its base by a stream supplying the fish which formed so important a necessary of life in these as in other convents. By the year 1340 there were already in existence not less than forty-five monastic establishments of the same kind and origin; and in the period just described this number had nearly trebled. The convent at Windesem, however, always remained the institution in chief, and after it the whole body of these convents in the Netherlands and in Germany were called the Windesem Congregations.

It is, however, to the second and humbler foundation of Canons Regular of the Common Life that we owe both what insight we can gain into their loftiest conceptions, and (unless the preponderance of opinion concerning the authorship of the *Imitatio Christi* be in error) the one enduring embodiment of these. Mount St. Agnes was for seventy-two years the home of Thomas Hamerken, of Kempen (a tranquil little town formerly in the Archbishopric of Cologne, now in Rhenish Prussia, which at the present day has little to recall the memory which makes it illustrious, unless it be the humane consideration which is paid in it to the inhabitants of its principal edifice, an asylum for the deaf and dumb). Seventy-two years—from his arrival there in 1399, in the twentieth year of his life, to the day of his death! "Blessed is he who has lived well in one and the same place, and made a happy end." The writer of these

words was of humble birth, a handicraftsman's son ; and it seems to have been the force of example which attracted him into the life of which his own career was to become a lasting type. For the names of several other natives of Kempen occur among the Brethren or the Canons of the Common Life, and Thomas's own elder brother John, who had become a Canon at Windesem, and was afterwards the first prior of the convent at St. Agnes, had preceded him on his way, on which a younger brother named Gobelinus seems afterwards to have followed him. Thomas spent six years as a scholar, and one as a brother, at Deventer, residing during the last in the Florentius house, to whose founder and inmates he has erected an imperishable monument. Florentius, who had enabled him to go through his preparatory studies, acquiesced in his desire to devote himself to a monastic life ; and thus, after not less than seven years of probation at St. Agnes, he was in 1406 admitted as a Regular member of the convent. "It is no small matter," he writes, "to dwell in a monastery, or in a congregation, and to live therein, without reproof, and to persevere faithfully till death." Doubtless the good Thomas had his part in the trials incident to the inner life of all small communities, as well as in troubles of greater outward importance. He shared the three years' exile of his brother-canons on the occasion of the episcopal troubles in 1425. After he had held the office of sub-prior in the convent, he lost it—perhaps in consequence of this very flight on ship-board ; and was subsequently appointed to the post of steward—the "office of Martha," as he calls it. He was ultimately again made sub-prior, having in the interval held the appointment of Master of the Novices ; and some of the discourses are preserved in which he encouraged the piety of his charges, among other things by the narration of "modern instances," which have perhaps escaped the notice of those good Protestants who claim Thomas as a precursor of the Reformation. But it is not his theology which I can here pretend to discuss. In it he was a child of his times, and his writings breathe the particular atmosphere in which they were produced ; the secret of the influence of his genius lies in the enthusiasm of his personal devotion. At one time he enforces his new *γνώθι σεαυτόν* : "This is the highest and most profitable lesson, truly to know and to despise ourselves." At another, he can thus directly point the way to his ideal : "This is the reason why there are found so few contemplative men, because there are few who know how to separate themselves wholly from perishable and created things. For this a great grace is required, which may raise the soul and bear it above itself." Thus in him the contemplative side of the Common Life, to which the active is ministrant, is consummately shown forth. But the tranquillity which he seems to typify is not that of a repose obtained without effort, or enjoyed unbroken. The conscientious steward, the laborious copyist, the much-sought preacher, the rigorous ascetic, in his threescore years and twelve of retirement led a life which was no dream ; "in all things," he was wont to say, "I have sought rest, but I

have found it nowhere save in *hoekens ende boeckens* " (in nooks and in books).

Thomas a Kempis belongs in the greater part of his life to the second period in the history of the Brotherhoods, though he is the historian of the first. He had never known Groot, and Florentius had been the paternal friend of his boyhood; and when he fell asleep himself after his long day's work, both Gerard and his friends had long passed away, though it was still nearly two centuries before the piety of a remote Brotherhood bore their remains to their last resting-place at Emmerich. About the time of Thomas's death that decline in the vigour and usefulness, though not as yet in the outward prosperity, of the institutions may be said to have begun, of which their modern historians have sufficiently traced the causes. These may, perhaps, not unfairly be summed up in the fact which institutions, like individuals, are so slow to recognise—the best of their work had been done. In general, the advance of the Renaissance in Germany had overtaken the efforts of the Brotherhoods and their schools, to which in its beginnings it had owed so much. In particular, the printing-press, which they only here and there took into their service, was beginning to supersede their own less efficacious method of multiplying books, in which so many of them had found a main support, as well as a distinctive badge of their Common Life. The centre of both intellectual and spiritual effort was certainly no longer in the Low Countries; and though, when the day of the Reformation had arrived, Luther did his utmost to attest his warm admiration of the spirit and the practice of the Brotherhoods, it was hard indeed for them to choose their side—harder than either for purely ecclesiastical foundations on the one hand, or for purely academical bodies on the other. So their side was in very many instances *chosen for them*; in Protestant States their establishments were swept away, in Catholic their educational functions passed into the hands of the Jesuits; while the Brethren's and Canons' and analogous Sisters' Houses became convents of the ordinary type. Concerning the earlier part of this period of decay we possess a very curious piece of evidence (of which a quite unfair use has been made) in a letter addressed by Erasmus to the Pope's Secretary, and intended for the ear of the Pope himself. In it he tells the story of two young men whom, on their being left orphans with a small property, their designing guardians had resolved to bring up for a monastic life. When they were old enough to be sent to those schools "which are now called universities," the guardians, fearing the secular influence of such a place upon their wards, determined to place them in an establishment of those *Fratres Collationarii* "who now-a-days are to be found any- and everywhere, and who gain their living by teaching boys." The principal purpose of these brethren, continues Erasmus, is to break the spirit of their best pupils, and to mould them into fit subjects for a monastic life. The Dominicans and Franciscans declare that without these seminaries their own Orders would

soon perish from inanition. "For my part," he adds, "I believe that these institutions may contain some honest men; but as they all suffer from lack of the best authors, and in their obscurity follow their own usages and rules of life, *without comparing themselves with anyone but themselves*, I do not see how they can be liberal educators of youth; and at all events the fact speaks for itself, that from nowhere issue forth young men with scantier scholarship and with viler manners." The younger of the two brothers knew more than his teachers did, one of whom he roundly described as the most unlearned and boastful monster on whom he ever set eyes. "And such they very often entrust with the care of boys. For their teachers are not chosen according to the judgment of learned men, but by the *fiat* of the patriarch, who very often knows nothing of letters." The writer then relates how one of the two young men, after "losing two years or more" in one of these houses, was easily persuaded to take the vows in one of the establishments of those brethren who rejoice in calling themselves *Canons*; while the other was with greater difficulty drawn into a net of the same kind, which was kept so tight over him that he could only hope to escape from it through the intervention of His Holiness.

Allowing a little for the pointedness of a style with which the Pope had good reason to be "singularly delighted," allowing more for the burning hatred of monkery which animated Erasmus, we may see in this letter a picture probably true enough in many cases to the actual condition or growing tendency of the brethren and their conventual establishments. In other instances, the convents began to take thought of worldly things, to push the practice of trade and industry, and to develop that love of property which seems almost inevitable in a corporate body, and of which the germs may perhaps be detected even at St. Agnes' in its early days. As time went on, no new *afflatus* manifested itself, but there was a noteworthy tenacity in the Common Life even when its institutions had become nothing more than an insignificant branch of the conventual system of the diminished Church of Rome. As late as the year 1728 not fewer than thirty-four convents sent their representatives to a general assembly of the Windesem Chapter.

The Brethren of Deventer and their foundations took no part, so far as I know, in any endeavour to heal the breach which the Reformation had effected. But Catholics and Protestants alike may acknowledge the efforts of men who helped to teach the modern world to love books without ceasing to love what is better than books, and who (though educational reformers in their generation) did not lose sight of the maxim of one of their number, that "there is a great difference between the wisdom of an enlightened and devout man, and the knowledge of a well-read and studious clerk,"

From the Heart of the Wolds.

In spite of old Burton's remark, "Who sees not a great difference between the wolds of Lincolnshire and the Fens?" it may be feared that much popular ignorance exists on the point. An impression prevails that there is no scenery in Lincolnshire, and that its air is unhealthy. A glance at its farmers by the covert side, when waiting for the fox to break, or its ploughboys driving their horses afield, would dispel the latter illusion. Could a townsman follow these plough-lads home, and watch their consumption of bacon and dumplings, he would simply be amazed. As for the former belief, not three miles from where we write, rises a hill which commands a wide view over a fair champaign country, in which at least twenty church-towers can be counted. Beyond it, blue sky and a warm grey sea melt into far-distant haze, while a suspicion of Yorkshire and even the fine tower of Patrington, in Holderness, meets the eye in that white bank, like a long line of cloud stretching along to the left. Ruskin and De Wint have purged our eyes, and taught us to see beauties in the flat fenland, did we care to point them out at present. Sir C. Anderson rises to eloquence at the view from the Cathedral towers, while Turner's brush, or Seymour Haden's etching needle, might have dwelt lovingly on "that very remarkable and, in our opinion, unique view from the bank at Burton Stather, broken by tussocks of rough grass, and interspersed with old elders and picturesque thorns and whins, among which the rabbits play and springs trickle, lurking below the damp moss and tangled fern. There have we often stood and watched the steamers, the varied sails of billy-boys and keels, on the broad streams of the Trent and Ouse, which at this point join the broader Humber; some wending their way to the markets of the West Riding; some dropping down, laden with potatoes from the warping grounds, bound for the great vorago of London; others lying helplessly on the mud banks, waiting the coming tide. Curlews and seagulls, and, in the winter time, grey-backed crows hover over the water. Between the two rivers is a rich alluvial delta, with the old church of Luddington, near which is Waterton, and not far off Amcotts, the nurseries of those ancient names. On the Ouse, Saltmarsh, the residence of that race for many a long year, the modern spire of Goole, the lofty tower of Howden, the Abbey of Selby, and beyond, rising in solemn majesty, the minster of York."* The long outlook over the wooded valley between Benniworth and Lincoln Cathedral, on one

* Sir C. Anderson's *Lincoln Pocket Guide* (Stanford, 1880), p. 8.

side of the Wolds, and the grassy, so-called "marshes," near Great Cotes and Stallingborough, on the eastern side, with the varied play of sun and shadow sweeping over them on a gusty day—are two other most characteristic landscapes, which once seen are never forgotten.

Such, then, being the æsthetical value of the Wolds, we shall not dwell upon their agricultural capabilities, the large fields of corn waving in the keen air of the uplands, the huge flocks of Leicester sheep dotted over their swelling pastures—these pictures being at present somewhat tantalising to Lincolnshire farmers. It will be safer to turn to their physical character. A long ridge of chalk runs down the county parallel to the Lincoln heights, something like the "duplex spina" extending along the back of Virgil's well-bred horse. This ridge enters the county, after dipping beneath the Humber, near Barton, and runs in a south-eastern direction till it dies away into the Fens near Spilsby. On the eastern side, lower terraces break down towards the sea, also trending to the east; while, every here and there, minor valleys are cut through them, with outlets leading towards the German Ocean. Some of these vales are deep and winding, ridged with mounds—like huge railway embankments—of almost artificial regularity; others possess a more level descent, with softly rounded lips and sides, denuded by centuries of frost and sunshine, while occasionally, fronting the west, a jagged bank of chalk is exposed, over which a network of ivy trails, while dwarf elders and straggling ashes overshadow it. Large quarries have been opened, every here and there, on the Wolds; and few features are more pleasing to an artistic eye than the cup-like hollow of such an abandoned pit in autumn, with its fringe of bents waving above, and its tufted poppies blazing against the setting sun, which brings out the white walls in strong contrast among the surrounding greenery, while in the moonlight these pale walls and silvered heaps of *débris* stand like ghostly fabrics, telling of other days and other men who worked within them. The chief want in these verdant vales is water. When the sea tore its way through the hills in the valleys we have been describing, and drained off towards the east, it seems to have borne with it the fresh water as well. No rivers, it will be seen by a glance at the map, pour through these chalk valleys; few or no streamlets exist; and a fortnight's dry weather attenuates the few which are found into silvery threads, or in such a dry season as 1868, leaves, here and there, a few glittering pools, like pearls which have slipped off their string. A limestone district is always a porous country; but, on the other hand, as being easily pierced by the carbonic acid gas which the rain-water it imbibes holds in solution, it forms an excellent medium for the formation of springs. The celebrated "blow-wells" in the district round Grimsby are familiar illustrations of this tendency, while every here and there on the Wolds intermittent springs, resembling the "gypsies" of Yorkshire and "lavants" of Hants, burst out of the hill-sides. These, as being largely dependent upon previous wet weather, increase or lessen the capricious flow of the

streamlets. On the Wolds above Grimsby is one of these, known as Welbeck, which Denzil Holles had intended to divert to the moats of a great house projected by him in the neighbourhood. He died, however, in 1590, before he could carry out his schemes, the regularly planted oak trees round the house's site and the still-bubbling well-head only remaining to tell the story. It was of such an intermittent spring that a farmer roundly accused his parson, who had lately come with some new ecclesiastical ideas into the parish, of being the cause that the water had not burst for many months: "Twasn't likely it should run when thou comedst with thy Puseyism!" We have known people on their death-beds long, after the touching fashion of David with the well of Bethlehem, for a draught from the sparkling spring of Welbeck; and no better water-cresses can be found in the country-side than those which grow in the wide basin under the spring when it does condescend to run.

The Wold, then, being the hilly as opposed to the Fen country, and having gained the name from its wild, wooded nature, we purpose to take our readers through some of its scenery. With its northern portion is associated a book so curious in itself, that it deserves mention, though we shall not dare to emulate its euphuistic English. It is almost incredible that little more than fifty years ago such a magnificently pompous style could have found favour with book-buyers. The book, which is now scarce, is by a Miss Hatfield, who seems to have been a governess, and its pages represent the fashionable superfine diction which in those benighted days of education was taught to children.* "Dear Frederick" is never suffered to hear the commonest object named in other than the finest language, and the authoress evidently thought that when she reached such unfamiliar places as Burton Stather and Alkborough, but a very little distance further lay Ultima Thule. Miss Hatfield saw white poppies in many gardens near Coleby, and was surprised "that the simple, healthy peasants of Lincolnshire should seek the deleterious enjoyment" of their narcotic qualities, though her amazement would be increased could she have known that, at present, multitudes of men and women in the Fens purchase weekly, on market-day, sufficient opium and laudanum for the next week's consumption. She describes, in a feeble manner, some of the northern Wold villages which she had seen, as Lady A. had told her, "I know you do not wish to remain in a quiescent state." A sunset, at page 193, is positively too gorgeous to be so much as reflected in our pages; but the description of morning must be quoted as a sample of the boarding-school diction of the period. "This morn, Aurora, with a lively step, drew aside night's sable curtains, and began to dress the chambers of the east with crimson drapery. The god of day, quickly mounting, with rapid course rolled his chariot wheels o'er ethereal space, throwing reproachful glances upon

* *The Terra Incognita of Lincolnshire; with observations, moral, descriptive, and historical, in original letters written purposely for the improvement of Youth, 1816.*

the couch of the drowsy slumberer. Awakened by his salutation as he passed my window, round which the jessamine and woodbine twining soften his too ardent rays, I started from my pillow, upon which balmy sleep had rested upon his downy pinions," &c., &c. (p. 73). These buds of fancy, had the authoress attempted to write in verse, would naturally have blossomed into such poetry as Laura Matilda's in the *Rejected Addresses*.

Although it is said to be a peculiarity of chalk hills that they never form watersheds, we shall place the reader on the best imitation of one, on a declivity towards the centre of the Wolds, near Ludford. The Bain river, which, however, is for many miles but a rivulet, runs hence, on one side of the hill, towards Horncastle and the south. A "beck," to give its Scandinavian name to another rivulet, breaks from the other side of the hill about a mile away, and flows in a north-west direction till it ultimately falls into the sea opposite Spurn Head. Both rivulets flow by celebrated scenes in mediæval history; both are equally renowned for trout. If we follow the course of the latter, however, a sufficiently typical view of the Wold and its villages will be obtained. On one side of a rough fallow field is a sudden semi-circular break in the bank. Three slender rivulets gush out of as many orifices in this chalky bank, almost immediately uniting to form a limpid streamlet, and this at once commences babbling and prattling, in child-like fashion, over a few handfuls of gravel, and in a dozen yards or so is again silent, feeling the impropriety, in this busy county, of sparkling or lapsing into playfulness, and at once settling down to the business of life. The natives know this cradle of the beck as Adam's Head. For a field or two the still youthful stream flows at its own wayward will; a few sad wildflowers only bloom beside it, the genius of farming here not tolerating such gauds, else it might be the beginning of one of the happier rivulets of the western shires. Ere long the sterner work of life begins. Just as the boy of nine years, on the hill-side above, is paid a few pence a day to shout to the marauding rooks, so at Buttermilk Springs (where a few more streamlets from the hill-side swell the slender thread of the main stream), the poor little beck is caught, forced to flow through an iron pipe, and actually compelled to work a hydraulic ram. Civilisation has seized upon its victim. The cast-iron pipe, the monotonous brick-work, the plunging ram in its subterranean cave are painfully prosaic and bare. The east wind starves all æstheticism out of the heart of nature in these exposed valleys. No tender undergrowth of many-coloured mosses lovingly softens the ugliness of these staring utilities; no lady-fern droops her nodding fronds around the little springs; no *blechnum* nestles beneath the obtrusive pipe, or *adiantum* depends from the brick-work. The artist and the searcher for beauty must look in more favoured shires for nature's wildlings. Here all is commonplace and wind-swept; more suggestive of the newest colony than of old Mother England. We sigh, and the very name of the hamlet, Kirmond-le-Mire,

accords well with our saddened thoughts, with earth's carking cares, and the character of the locality. Bully Hill, too, above us, sounds aggressive, minacious, repulsive. But even here sentiment is not wholly strangled. Along the High Street, above Adam's Head, runs a long detached mound, called the Giant's Grave. After lying for generations in neglect, a neighbouring farmer ploughed and sowed wheat upon it; but nothing came up. Not to be beaten, he next year planted potatoes on it: not one ever grew. In despair it is now abandoned to the grass and moss with which it has for centuries been clothed by boon nature.

Passing by an old peat bog (from which a little searching disinters the leg bone of a red deer), the beck, which is now a respectable stream with fish in it, runs through a magnificent stretch of meadows from the rampart-like banks near Thorpe. Abruptly turning near Stainton-le-hole, it passes by a covert and then a rookery, with every here and there on the hills above its course a deserted quarry filled with stunted larches and an undergrowth of ivy; and so, having now attained, as it were, its majority, it reaches the meadows on which stood the religious house known as Irford. The trout, which, together with the retired situation, must have first tempted the founder to build here, dart under the bank as we draw near to the heaps and mounds over which lambs and their mothers are now peacefully grazing, and which show where the priory stood close by the stream. The chapel, with the bases of pillars forming side aisles, may be traced under the turf which covers their slight elevation. So little is known about this secluded abode of faith that it is even disputed whether it was a Benedictine or a Præmonstratensian house. Tanner calls it the latter, and states that it was founded by Philip de Albin in Henry II.'s reign. It was dedicated to the Virgin Mary, and held six or eight religious about the time of the dissolution, when its revenues were reckoned in gross at 14*l.* 13*s.* 4*d.* The prioress was one Joanna Thompson. On July 3, 1539, she and her sister nuns formally surrendered the house to the commissioners, and attached their common seal to the document (the Virgin crowned and bearing a sceptre, with the Holy Child upon her lap). The legend is imperfect, and only the following letters remain:—

. . . ORIS·ET·CONVENTVS·DE·IRF . . .*

Lingering near these forgotten mounds it is easy to see that some parts of the neighbouring farmhouse are built of stones belonging to the

* See Dugdale's *Monasticon* (1830, Caley, &c.), vol. vi. pt. 2, p. 936, and Tanner's *Notitia Monastica* (Nasmith, 1787), No. 43 (Lincolnshire). In a footnote Tanner observes that Dugdale places Irford among Benedictine monasteries. He himself considers that it is more likely it was a Præmonstratensian house, because it seems to have had some dependence upon Newhouse, which was undoubtedly Præmonstratensian, and the seal of the Abbot of Newhouse was affixed in behalf of these nuns to a convention which they made with the Dean and Chapter of Lincoln. The Præmonstratensian order was a reformation of St. Augustine's rule, therefore this house might easily be called "ordinis S. Augustini" in Rymer's vol. xiv., p. 667.

ruins, and an old woman tells us she remembers some seventy years ago that walls belonging to the Priory were yet in existence. Musing among the lambs, with rooks flying overhead in the sunshine, we recall that sultry 3rd of July, some three hundred and forty years ago, when Joanna Thompson and her trembling nuns, while the very foundations of their life seemed torn up, resigned revenues and lands to the king, who so soon would grant the latter to Robert Tyrwhitt. They looked upon the same pastoral slopes as we do; the ancestors of these rooks cawed overhead; the beck ran then as it runs now, but an impassable gulf separates the grave, self-contained religion of the last prioress (which in these seclusions mainly spent itself on the love of God), from the impulsive, philanthropic character of religion at present. Missions, associations, and societies innumerable now dissipate the energies of the serious-minded. Personality everywhere rebels against the ecclesiastical organisation which would hold all men in captivity round a central infallibility. Material civilisation in too many hearts tramples down the religious sentiment itself. Even while we linger by these verdant mounds the railway whistle from afar penetrates the quiet valley, and at once helps us to measure the interval between the nineteenth century and the so-called ages of faith. Joanna Thompson in her sorrow probably indulged in previsions of the future.* Her wildest dream could hardly compass the free, active, inquiring England of to-day.

A mile and a half more brings us to one of the best-wooded villages of the Wolds. Swinhope (the wild swine's retreat, or, it may be, Sweyn's abode) lies in a hollow; hall, parsonage, and church well nigh smothered in fine old ashes and oaks. Very few beeches are seen in this district, yet the beech probably grew here before the Conquest in vast woods similar to those which are now seen across the German Ocean in Denmark. St. Helen, the mother of Constantine (who himself was born at York), and the discoverer of the true Cross, is the patron saint of this very small church, as of several others in the neighbourhood. This fact seems to give an approximation to the date at which many of the original churches of these little villages were built, before Saxon, Dane, and devouring Northman left their destructive traces behind, in the reddened stones still to be seen in the church walls of the district (notably at Clee), which have manifestly passed through the flames. The predecessor of the present manor house at Swinhope was burnt in the civil wars of Charles I. A double row of gnarled hawthorns in the park strikes the passer-by and reminds him that the hawthorn, though unjustly neglected by landscape gardeners, is one of the most picturesque of our native trees, especially when bent with age, and is withal one of the most beautiful of trees twice in the year; in May, when clothed in clouds of perfumed snow, and in autumn, when its intensely red haws, touched by the faint sunlight, kindle a late glory in the woodlands.

* She had a pension of 6*l.* granted her after the dissolution of the Priory.

These decrepit but striking specimens of hawthorn at once call up a panorama of human life. How many hopeful boys have birdnested in them, and rambled underneath their shade in youth's enchanted spring time with soft arms clad in the quaint gowns and ruffles dear to our grandmothers resting on theirs. A few years more, and then old slowly passes by them; the old man receiving, let us hope, the happiness which came of love which blossomed into marriage, and not unable to reckon up some good works suggested and helped on by the companionship of a good wife.

And once, alas! nor in a distant hour,
 Another voice shall come from yonder tower;
 When by his children borne, and from his door,
 Slowly departing to return no more,
 He rests in earth with them that went before.

(Rogers, *Human Life*.)

A single hawthorn tree in the North which never seems to grow larger is always an enchanted tree.*

Here the beck has become an excellent trout-stream, one of the few to be found in this district of East Anglia. It turns round to Thor-ganby, a hamlet rather than a village. More weatherbeaten ashes surround the somewhat melancholy hall with its low rooms and ancient casements. It formerly belonged to the Caldwell family, of whom an aged man and his wife, being Royalists, were attacked by the Parliamentarians in 1643, dragged out of their house, barbarously ill-treated in Lincoln Castle, and their servant murdered.† The flower-garden is formal, fragrant with memories rather than blossom. Here the Northmen's traces are again very apparent; together with Thoresway and Thoresby, in the immediate neighbourhood, the parish bears the name of their great deity, Thor. Still the beck flows on, to a point where the Thoresway branch augments it after itself has passed through Croxby Pond, a large reedy swamplike sheet of water, tenanted by coots and widgeon. Here it finds itself cutting athwart a series of chalk valleys, the even rounded tops running along as regularly as if carved by man's spade, while the chalk protrudes and only leaves scant room for fringes of bents and hawkweeds to cover its nakedness. Lower down these scarped cliffs rise into an amphitheatre clothed with larch and spruce. At its base the beck runs with some rapidity, and badgers have found a congenial haunt in the retired nooks above. The larger willow-herb grows along the waterside in tall thickets which provide in late summer the exact tint of red necessary to blend harmoniously with the pale scheme of colour around, but are intensely distasteful to the keen trout-fisher, as he cannot throw his flies by them with any comfort. Here these willow-herbs abound, but not to any great extent elsewhere on the beck. They form a sample of the little differences which a loving eye can discern at every

* Thorpe's *Northern Mythology*, ii. p. 275.

† Sir C. Anderson, *ut sup.*, p. 87.

field of its course. Mr. Jefferies saves us from attempting to describe willow-herbs by his keen appreciation of their beauty. "They are the strongest and most prominent of all the brook plants. At the end of March or beginning of April the stalks appear a few inches high, and they gradually increase in size until in July they meet above the waist and form a thicket by the shore. Not till July does the flower open, so that, though they make so much foliage, it is months before any colour brightens it. The red flower comes at the end of a pod, and has a tiny white cross within it. It is welcome because by August so many of the earlier flowers are fading."* At the end of this amphitheatre, where stands an old windmill, the beck finds the grey weatherbeaten church but modern village of Hatcliffe, anciently Haute Cliffe, from the above-mentioned chalky ridges. Here a student of words will remark, as well in the prefix *le* of the next village, that, like English history and the language itself, the place names of England form a palimpsest, as it were; Keltic being succeeded by Scandinavian and Teutonic words, and they in their turn replaced by Norman-French vocables. Still the wear and tear of language everywhere continues, as Cocher Plat, a hamlet not five miles hence, testifies, which is a mere corruption in the last forty years of Cottager's Plat. A few grave-stones which have been collected within the church bear the name of Lyon de Hatcliffe, the earliest family connected with the parish which can be traced. Their manor-house stood in the adjoining field. Some grassy mounds yet mark its site, but not a stone remains upon another.

Thence the beck flows through wide meadows to a picturesque water-mill, with abundance of angles and gables for the sketcher, till it crosses the Roman way known as the Barton Street, from its running to that little town on the Humber. It is carried hence along the first slope of the wolds, and commands grand views over the low country and the German Ocean, while Yorkshire like a faint blue cloud is seen across the ruddy estuary named after the drowned Hun. Memory flies back on passing over the Street to its first construction, when Roman legionaries compelled the wretched peasants at the spear's point to lay down chalk and the boulders still sown broadcast over this district, in conformity with the directions of Vitruvius, which have resulted in what is still a splendid road, with broad margins of short grass on each side. Fifty years ago a considerable traffic passed along it; now this is diverted to the railway in the champaign below, and has left the Street so lonely that at night the belated pedestrian, in lack of fellow-mortals, may well fancy that it was here

Saint Withold footed thrice the wold;
 He met the night-mare, and her name told,
 Bid her alight and her troth plight,
 And aroynt thee, witch, aroynt thee! (*King Lear*, 3, 7.)

Two villages, one on each side of the mill at the crossing of the beck

* *Round about a Great Estate*, p. 34.

over this street, merit a word. On the left, over the chalk ridges is Beelsby, with the deplorable shell of an ancient church, and a grand view over the Humber from its yard, whence in old days the ships of the Vikings may have been beheld by a crowd of panic-stricken hinds advancing to devastations of the country. In an adjoining field lingers one of the few legends of this prosaic district. A treasure is supposed to be hidden in it, and at times two little men wearing red caps, something like the Irish *leprechauns*, may be seen intently digging for it. Do not disturb them, or on nearer approach you may find but two red-headed goldfinches swinging on a thistle. Within a secluded vale to the right, where huge ragged ashes, the characteristic trees of this district, and still more sprawling elders cling to the bare chalk cliff as they have done from time immemorial, a couple of miles from the beck, is a green knoll with what resembles the ruins of a roofless barn. These are the sole remains of the alien Priory of Ravendale: four walls built of rough chalk and sandstone, and one jamb of the east window and the same belonging to the south door. A large ash shelters them, and cattle graze carelessly by them; yet round these bare walls in lieu of ivy clings the whole history of the neighbourhood. In their very name, Ravendale, lies, like a fly in amber, a reminiscence of the Northmen who, under their celebrated raven standard, first harried and then colonised the district. From this glimpse of it lit up with flames and red with blood, darkness closes round Ravendale until its name emerges in Domesday Book as forming part of the enormous possessions of Count Alan of Brittany. In King John's reign, 1202, one of his descendants, also an Alan, together with his wife Petronilla, became Founders of a Præmonstratensian Abbey at Beau Port in Brittany, itself now a similar, only more majestic ruin than its Lincolnshire daughter. To this abbey Alan gave "in pure and perpetual alms-gift for the salvation of my soul and the souls of my father, and mother, and wife Petronilla, all my churches in the Soke of Waltham, together with all my vill of West Ravendale for the clothing of its canons." His churches in the Soke of Waltham (a village three miles from Ravendale) were those belonging to some seven or eight villages of this district, including Beelsby, Hatcliffe, and Barnoldby. The alien Priory of Ravendale was founded by the Abbot of Beau Port in order to look after the English property of his abbey. The next that is heard of it gives us a curious glimpse into the manners of the period. In 1333 William, the Prior of Ravendale, is found coursing a hare in the warren of one Edmund Bacon at Beseby (four miles away), which, however, escaped from his greyhounds. He was summoned for the trespass and fined 10*l.*, showing that there was a healthy spirit of litigation abroad in those days.* With few

* Compare Chaucer's Monk (*Canterbury Tales, Prologue*):—

"Greihoundes he hadde as swift as foul of flight,
Of pricking and of hunting for the hare
Was all his lust; for no cost wolde he spare."

vicissitudes this arrangement continued until 1439, when Henry VI. granted Ravendale, with all its appurtenances, and the advowsons of its churches to the Chapter of the Collegiate Church of Southwell. The Ecclesiastical Commissioners, forty years ago, unhappily dissolved that corporation, and vesting the revenues of Southwell Church in themselves distributed the patronage of these Lincolnshire churches between the recently created sees of Manchester and Ripon. One little fact, though that a characteristic one, alone connects at present these parishes on the beck with this long train of history. Their rectors yet pay the same annual pensions of six and eightpence and the like to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, which so long ago as 1380 they are recorded in the Exchequer Rolls to have paid every year to the revenues of Beau Port.*

A ghost story here lightens the graver matters of history. The belated traveller may see in the winter nights a headless man leave the ruin of the little Church of Ravendale, and walk down into the valley. After a little he returns happy, with his head under his arm, sits upon the ruined walls, and utters loud cries of joy. On one occasion a labourer hard by held the gate open for him to pass through, and—nothing happened. The moral of which is, always be civil, even to ghosts.

In an old stained glass window of the Church of Barnoldby-le-Beck, the next village, is some good leafage of oak-leaves and acorns, recalling long-past years when the county was celebrated for its oak trees.† Anthony Harwood, the parson of this parish, was a zealous royalist in the civil wars, and was expelled from his cure by the Earl of Manchester for absence in the King's army to assert His Majesty's cause, for dissuading his parishioners from rebellion, and for observing the ceremonies of the Church.‡ Fifty years ago the "Feast" of this little village was kept up with customs which at present seem relics of prehistoric barbarism, though Barnoldby on the Beck was probably no worse herein than its neighbours. "Lasses" ran races down the road for "gownpieces," and every "Pharson's Tuesday" (Shrove Tuesday) cock-fighting went on in the pinfold from morning to night, all the population sitting round it with their feet inside, the "bairns" doing their best to get an occasional peep. "I mind," said an old inhabitant, "a farmer's wife in particular who used, early every Pharson's Tuesday, to put on her red cloak and take her seat upon the wall to watch the mains. She would cry out—I seem to hear her now—'A guinea on the black 'un! a guinea on the black 'un!'"

* See Dugdale, *Monasticon*, and a paper by the Precentor of Lincoln in *Ass. Architectural Reports*, vol. xiv., p. 166.

† See the ballad of *Earl Douglas and the Fair Oliphant* :

" He carried the match in his pocket
That kindled to her the fire,
Well set about with oaken spails
That leaned o'er Lincolnshire."

‡ Walker's *Sufferings of the Clergy*.

The beck now enriches deep meadows and wide arable fields with its even streams in the steady beneficent flow of manhood, having long put away childish graces, infantile prattle, and the music dear alike to poet or dreamer. It has cut its way through the chalk of the wolds into the post-tertiary deposits at their feet which are almost level with the sea line and are plentifully sprinkled with the boulders of the glacial drift. Brigsley, the first of these low-lying villages, is chiefly remarkable for the phonetic attrition of its old Saxon name, Brigeslai, in Domesday and the Norman-French name, Bricelai, into the Northumbrian Brigsley, the bridge on the lea. Waitbe, the next parish, contains a very curious early Norman or, it may well be, Saxon church tower, one of a group found in this neighbourhood. This tower is placed between the nave and chancel. There the beck straggles onwards in great loops, each with its pool where the fish collect and the lovely pink spikes of the amphibious *persicaria* float to gladden the wandering angler's eye. It would almost lose itself in wide meadows, running away to the horizon, were it not for two landmarks, the well-proportioned church tower of Tetney and afar within a forest of masts the tall water-tower from which the hydraulic cranes of the docks at Great Grimsby are set in motion. Dreary and monotonous as this district would be thought by dwellers in more hilly counties, it possesses a beauty of its own which is worth searching for, and is generally beloved when found. Perhaps the quest is better rewarded when its *Egeria* is discovered, in proportion as the other nymphs of this wide, wind-swept expanse are coy and retiring. The young corn, the far-reaching acres of grass, the larks drowned in the blue overhead yet still warbling, the sense of freedom and vastness which these solitudes engender, endear them to their lover in Spring. Who could quarrel with Summer and her wealth of flowers in these meadows, her fringe of aquatic plants edging our beck, the water crowfoot, brooklimes, meadow-sweet, and especially the great blue water forget-me-nots, blue as the eyes of Freya or Wordsworth's Lucy, and for the same reason, because they are retired as noontide dew or violets by the mossy stone? In autumn again, the transition is pleasant, from the uplands tufted with yellow corn to these dark green fields where the birds of winter are thus early showing themselves, the curlew with scimitar-like bill and wild cries intensifying the district's melancholy, the white-tailed sandpiper, flitting in terror up and down the beck, the grey Norway crows, true successors of the Northmen, on the look-out for cruel feastings on everything young and unprotected, the black-backed gull beating up against the stiff breeze and only too glad to join these marauders in their forays. High overhead—and these vast skies are a peculiar attraction of East Lincolnshire—a deep azure vault in summer spreads to a limitless horizon, while the grey clouds of winter are tossed and contorted over it in graceful wreaths which would delight Mr. Black or Professor Ruskin. He who is blessed with a sound pair of lungs and a catholic sense of beauty in these wide flats need not be pitied even in

the teeth of such an east wind as only here in England can be felt during March and April.

Traditions of their own linger round the lonely farmhouses, which all down the coast of Lincolnshire dot these post-tertiary flats. An Indiaman went to pieces on the sands off this one, a lady and her child only being rescued. On a stormy winter, the sea broke in upon the lands of that one, and spread far inland like a lake, killing every earthworm in the parish, and by their loss greatly injuring the fertility of the corn land. During that winter of apprehension, 1805, when a gun fired at sea by night, or two or three shots heard in the distance by day, set every dweller in the district on the alert through dread of a French invasion, all the waggons of the different farms were numbered and every hand told off, some to fill the carts with household gear, others to drive off sheep and cattle to the uplands at a moment's notice. The present generation cannot enter into the feverish state of alarm in which its ancestors along these solitary coasts then passed their time, but old men yet tell of it by the ingle nook, and a novelist might find much valuable matter amongst their anecdotes.

Many more wonders might be mentioned in this district by the sea, the blow-wells, the so-called hut circles, the method of finding plover's eggs, and the like; but the beck here creeps in premature old age with a somewhat sullen current into a little creek, known as Tetney Lock, where a shabby barge or two lingers idle, not unlike Charon's bark and the *tristi palus inamabilis unda* of the Styx, and some Hull fishermen are trying to catch eels and dace. It is not a dignified ending to the beck's life. Outside, a few old besoms are stuck up at intervals to mark the channel along a ditch leading through half a league of greasy mud. Beyond it, red waves are flashing into white, ships beating up towards Hull, a tug with its trail of smoke, a gull or two flapping over the mud. Unsavoury and commonplace as it all looks, here closes our beck's pilgrimage. At least, it is true to nature. Each stream has its own individuality; all are not romantic like the Laureate's "Brook," which runs near Somersby in this county. It is not every beck, nor every man, who makes a good end of it. Fitly, as some may think, is a little hamlet near at hand called "World's End."

Thus finishes our ramble from the heart of the Wolds. Choosing a stream merely for the sake of a thread on which to hang our few bright beads, a walk of some twenty-five miles at most has led us from its birth to where it sluggishly creeps into the German Ocean. It is itself a very young stream compared with others in the kingdom which have cloven through many yards of solid rock. This *parvenu* of ours, belonging to the last great geologic formation, chalk, has merely had to eat out a shallow track through soft banks. Not that it could not have performed more marvellous feats in this way had the structure of the country only given it an opportunity. The river Wily, in Wilts, managed to cut its way down, upwards of eighty feet and developed a new course for itself, while the

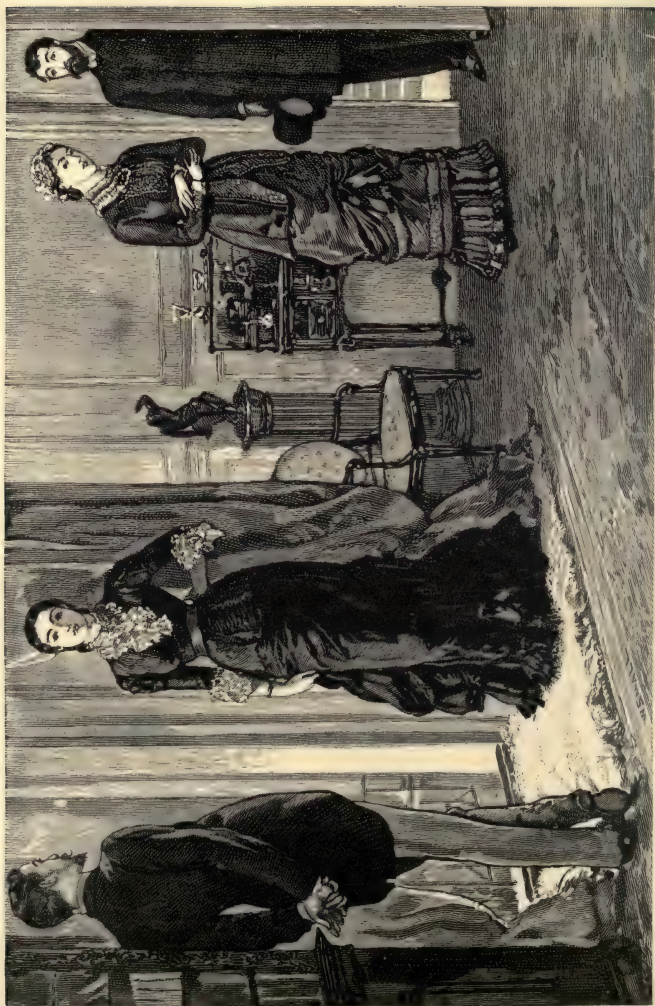
River Driftmen and late Pleistocene animals were living in its district.* The remarks we have made during our ramble by the footsteps of the beck may be taken as samples of the simple joys dear to a lover of country life. A so-called dull district has purposely been chosen to show that even it is capable of furnishing him with wealth who will take the trouble necessary to dig out ore. But little has been said of the flowers of the stream; yet the most unobservant eye must notice that a different vegetation attends each different step of even so humble a stream as this. Again, all the bird and animal life of a district is best seen by such a stream. Weasels and stoats regularly hunt along its banks; moles, rats, and mice come day by day to drink of it, just as all the large game of South Africa may be best seen and shot at the water holes. A few years' investigation of any of these divisions of nature by the side of such a stream will reveal much that is unexpected and interesting. Ghosts, bogies, and the supernatural generally have utterly vanished from this commonplace district before schools and newspapers. Even an old lady more than ninety years old said to us, "Fairies and shag-boys! † lasses are often skeart at them, but I never saw none, though I have passed many a time after dark a most terrible spot for them on the road at Thorpe." And certainly a whole essay would be too short to tell of the quaint colloquialisms of this country side; survivals of days before "book English" became fashionable, flotsam from the Viking ships, or merely the irregular coinage of Want and Wont. Who but a Lincolnshire man could fetch a "stee" (ladder); "lig i' the crew" (lie down in the fold yard); "remble" his house; or "skell" (turn topsy-turvy) a heavy box? Here, too, the "spreading" ploughboy fed on abundance of milk and bacon, though he will tell you he "is only among the middlins and not i' very good fettle inside," will take his "docky" (luncheon) by the hedge at ten, and afterwards work two yokes till dinner. How expressive again is the term "heart slain," of a horse that dies under too much work, while the general roughness of North country perceptions comes out in a favourite proverb, "a bealing cow" (*i.e.*, a lowing cow) "soon forgets her calf!" Such matters as these, which might easily be added to, lend an interest to the dullest district. Happy the man who is not above noticing them.

Wisdom there, and truth,
Not shy, as in the world, and to be won
By slow solicitation, seize at once
The roving thought, and fix it on themselves. ‡

* Dawkins, *Early Man in Britain* (Macmillan, 1880), p. 232.

† *I.e.* hogboys, a corruption of the Norse word *haug-búi*, the tenant of the *haug*, how, or tomb; a ghost or goblin. See Anderson's Introduction to the *Orkneyinga Saga*, p. ci.

‡ The "Winter Walk at Noon."



"HOW YOUNG SHE LOOKS!" SAID LAURA.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER XII.

A NEW FACE.



MRS. LATHAM and Miss Conway had never regretted their alliance. They had grown nearer to each other with the comfortable sympathy of people who agree in little things, and never discuss big ones. Their house was a pleasant one, and the circle of their friends widened fast. Laura, like all the Lauristons, was musical, and had always a warm welcome for acquaintances who had good voices, or who would bring their violins and try things over with her. Rachel's big rooms

were often full of their harmonies. It is true that every now and then some young fellow, who had been particularly assiduous in his practising, would vanish all at once and be seen and heard no more. Even before his disappearance his

"face, distraught and anxious, told
What hopeless errand he was bound upon,"

and it was only because he could not acquiesce in an unuttered certainty that Rachel was compelled to speak the word which banished him. The victim had only himself to blame. She was gentle, and grave, and beautiful in her far-off compassion; some one else came and practised in his place, and Mr. Lauriston shrugged his shoulders. In a few weeks' time no one remembered the exile, and the singing and playing went on as sweetly as ever.

It was an evening in November. Laura and Rachel were at home, but there was no practising. A friend of Laura's, who was going back to her husband in India, was paying a farewell call. Rachel sat apart, hardly listening to the conversation, which was eager, and yet broken and laborious, as conversation is apt to be when beneath it lies the consciousness that the speakers will exchange no more words for years. There was the anxiety to omit nothing that should be said; but, when a sentence had been uttered, there was the feeling that it really seemed hardly worth saying on the last evening. Rachel only knew Mrs. Roper slightly, and had no parting speeches to make. She pulled a great china bowl of chrysanthemums towards her, and began to rearrange them, leaning over them to inhale their bitter fragrance. She liked the smell of chrysanthemums; it was healthy and fresh, telling of earth, and vigorous growth, and chilly autumn breezes, not languid and heavy like the perfume of some frail hothouse flowers.

"Who can that be?" said Mrs. Latham suddenly, as a loud knock echoed through the silent house. "What a nuisance! I never thought anybody would come to-night! Oh, perhaps it is Adam!" she exclaimed with a look of relief.

Rachel did not answer. She pulled out some more dusky red flowers, and let them lie in a confused heap by the blue-and-white bowl. If she had cared to speak, she would have said, "No, that isn't Mr. Lauriston's knock." She did not know why she was sure, and it did not matter, since Laura would find out who it was in another minute. But it was not Mr. Lauriston.

The door was thrown open with the announcement, "Mr. Lauriston Brett!"

Laura sprang to her feet. "It isn't Adam, it's *Dick*!"

A young man came forward, neither tall nor short, neither handsome, nor ugly, slight, fair, grey-eyed, rapid and easy in his movements.

"Yes, it's Dick," he said. "It's not Adam, not the genuine article. But he's coming."

Laura rushed at him and kissed him. "My dear boy, I didn't know you were in town. Why didn't you write to me?"

"Because I never do write," he replied with a bright smile. "And I only came up this afternoon."

"And you came here at once, that's right! Oh! must you go?" This was to Mrs. Roper, who was standing up. "You don't remember my cousin Richard? Wait one moment, and I will come with you while you put on your bonnet." She turned to Miss Conway. "Rachel, dear, you know Richard by name, though you haven't met him before."

Rachel smiled, and uttered a civil word of welcome.

"I know Miss Conway by name," the newcomer exclaimed, looking straight at her.

"I must leave you two to make friends," said Laura, "while I see Edith off." Rachel shook hands with Mrs. Roper, wished her a pleasant

voyage, and, when the two ladies had rustled out of the room together, she turned slowly to the visitor, who was thrown so unexpectedly on her hands. A glance showed her that he was younger than she had thought him at first.

"Don't let me disturb you," he said, when he had accepted her invitation to sit down. "It seems to be my luck to be in the way to-day. I was coming along with Lauriston, and a man stopped him—some old friend he hadn't met for a long time. I fancied they didn't want me, so I said I'd go on. Consequently I walked into Laura's parting with that lady. Where is she off to?"

"India," Rachel replied.

"India? I shouldn't care to go to India, should you? I say, were you arranging those flowers? Don't let me hinder you. They say I'm always talking, but I needn't if you don't like. I can hold my tongue," said Mr. Lauriston Brett, with an air of pride in the possession of such a gift; "I may not often do it, but I can."

"Pray don't," said Rachel. "I doubt I was pulling the unlucky flowers out, rather than putting them in. And, anyhow, I don't arrange them in such an intense fashion that I mustn't be spoken to meanwhile."

"You've made this room much nicer," he said, looking round with a quick glance which reminded her of Mr. Lauriston. "You've got different curtains, and more pictures."

"Why, when did you see it?"

"Between two and three years ago. I came to see Laura, and you were away somewhere. I was only just passing through, you know."

"And now, of course, you are going to make a longer stay."

He nodded, and picked up a fallen chrysanthemum. "Yes, I suppose so. I thought it never would be settled, but it seems I'm to adorn the society of the metropolis. Lauriston, and my father, and I, have pulled different ways till it is too late for almost everything; at least it was my father who pulled; I stood still, and waited for him to come round."

"As to a profession for you, do you mean?"

"Yes." He nodded again, and smiled a little, showing his white teeth. He had an assured air; but it was a pleasant kind of assurance, a happy confidence that people were going to like him, and to be very nice to him. He looked at Rachel with an undisguised approval, which was amusing and not at all disagreeable.

"I thought Laura told me you were going to be a barrister," she said.

"Yes, but it is only just settled. It's difficult when one can't exactly decide for oneself. It's partly my cousin's concern; he finds the money, you know."

"Oh! he finds the money?" said Rachel with a smile.

"Yes; good of him, isn't it?" the young fellow answered in a rapid matter-of-fact tone. "So, naturally, he thinks he ought to have a voice in the matter, and I think so too."

"You are not particular, then?"

"Where's the good? The world wasn't made for me. I shall just make the best of it, only I don't want to work too hard. Oh! I think this will do very well. My father wanted me to go into the Church, but that didn't do; it wasn't my line, somehow. It isn't everybody's line, the Church."

"No," said Rachel. "Did Mr. Lauriston want you to go into the Church?" she asked suddenly with a doubtful expression.

"Lauriston? Oh! he didn't care. I daresay it would rather have amused him to have me the Rev. Dicky Brett (the girls at home call me Dicky), but he didn't suggest it, and I couldn't have done it. And as for the army, my father wouldn't hear of it. I don't know that I cared for it so particularly."

"The navy?" Rachel suggested.

"No, thank you. Never wanted to be a Nelson after I'd once been for a sail. They make out that everything is hereditary nowadays, don't they? Well, perhaps one of my people married a very seasick Frenchman; she might have fallen in love with him on shore, you know. I should think that would explain my sensations scientifically. There's nothing of the 'Britannia rules the waves' business about me. Do you like the sea, Miss Conway?"

"Better than you do," she answered with a laugh. "Well, I hope you will distinguish yourself on dry land."

"I don't think I shall," said Mr. Lauriston Brett. He still held the chrysanthemum, and swung it airily by its stalk. "I haven't a chance. If I had a good, cantankerous lot of friends, I might. But my people are all too peaceable and good-tempered. Now, you might help me, but I don't believe you'll ever have a lawsuit with anybody."

"Oh! but I will; I will indeed. What shall I do? You are not ready yet, are you?"

"Not quite," he said.

"Well, you must let me know when you are, and I'll—I'll buy a steam yacht, and run somebody down. Then I'll take you to the exact place and show you how it happened, and you shall defend me. Will that do?"

"No, no!" he exclaimed with a shudder, adding as a charitable afterthought, "You might hurt somebody! No, buy a bit of land—ever such a little bit will do—and dispute a right of way across it. That's so harmless; and if you'll only stick to it, you can spend every sixpence you have before you know where you are."

"Thank you," she said. "That would do charmingly, but I have just remembered that you don't want to work too hard. I don't think I'll employ you."

"Well, I think you are wise," he replied, and was silent for a moment, looking at her. Curiously enough, his light grey eyes reminded her of Mr. Lauriston's dark ones, in a way that Mrs. Latham's eyes never did.

Rachel reflected that he was very young, and felt impelled to offer him a little good advice. "If I were a man, I think I would work at my profession, whatever it might be. If I didn't, I should hate it!"

"Oh, yes," he assented readily, "if you had really got a profession. But this is only a make-believe." He suddenly shrugged his shoulders so exactly in his cousin's fashion that Miss Conway started. She might have supposed it to be a family trick, had there not been for the moment an audaciously perfect and delicate rendering of Mr. Lauriston's glance and manner, gone as soon as perceived. "I was brought up to the family profession," said Mr. Lauriston Brett, completely himself again.

"The family profession?" she repeated. "And what may that be?"

"Living on Lauriston," he replied, and looked calmly at her.

Rachel could only return a glance of incredulous wonder.

"There are a lot of us, and we are all brought up to it," he said. "Cousins of mine, you know. We are all Lauriston something or other, and we are always careful to call ourselves Lauriston, just to remind him a little. There are three fellows in Wales, Lauriston Jones they are; two schoolboys in Cornwall, the Lauriston Polhills; and I'm Lauriston Brett."

It was impossible to tell how far he was in earnest. He spoke with absolute simplicity and without the least trace of a smile. Rachel was perplexed. "I don't admire your choice of a profession," she said, feeling that to be a safe remark.

"I didn't choose it," he replied. "I was christened so."

"But are you the eldest? Because, if not, Mr. Lauriston could not be more than a schoolboy when some of you were christened."

"No, of course he wasn't. But it was just the same before that; there was an old bachelor uncle had all the money, and all his hungry relations were waiting till he should drop it. Then as Lauriston got the whole—not sixpence to any of the others—they all began to watch him. And he has behaved uncommonly well about it," said the young fellow magnanimously, "only it was rather a blow when he married."

"Well, I don't see why he wasn't to marry," said Rachel.

"Nor I," was the prompt answer. "Still, it was rather a blow. They thought there was something amiss with his heart, and he might die any day; didn't you know that?" Miss Conway was looking at him with startled eyes. "Didn't Laura ever tell you? I daresay not," said young Brett, evidently disconcerted; "I know she doesn't believe it, and no more do I. They said the same thing of the old uncle, and I'm sure I don't know what he died of; not that, anyhow, and he was quite as old as people with such a lot of money have any business to be. He was, really," adding the assurance as if Rachel had cast a doubt on the old gentleman's age.

"But Mr. Lauriston, does he believe it?" she asked.

"Oh, I should think not! There isn't anything in it, you know, only people will talk." And, as he spoke, the veritable Lauriston seemed

to shrug his shoulders in scorn of the idea. Nothing could be more reassuring. "I shouldn't have spoken of it, only some of our fathers and mothers, who thought we ought to have gone shares in the prize, made up their minds that he wasn't going to live. And they didn't like his marrying, naturally. But any one would say it was a fate; here is his wife dead, and only this poor little boy; the big inheritance out of reach again, and yet hanging on a chance, for he'll never marry a second time."

Rachel looked doubtfully at him, puzzled by his singular frankness, which yet had something boyishly confiding about it. Did he talk about his affairs in this way to everybody? She leaned back in her chair, feeling sorry for Lauriston's poor little boy, the one tender little life against so many.

"He's a nice little fellow, too," said Mr. Lauriston Brett, exactly as if he were finishing her thoughts aloud.

She looked up in surprise.

"The boy, I mean," he explained.

"The boy. Yes. You know him, then?"

"Oh, I go there sometimes. It isn't very amusing, though. Did you ever see the aunts?"

"Never."

"I wonder why Lauriston has such queer sisters. It couldn't be for his sins, could it? because the sisters came first by a good many years. It doesn't matter for me; I always get on all right; but I doubt it's dull for the boy. Why doesn't Laura ask him here for a bit? Hark! There's Lauriston."

Mr. Brett was right, for his cousin walked into the room a moment later. As he shook hands with Rachel, the young fellow threw himself back in his chair. "Laura is saying good-bye to somebody," he announced.

"I know," said Mr. Lauriston. "The farewells are finishing just inside the front door. Did you walk, Dick?"

"Yes."

"You have not been here long, then?"

"No, only a little while. Long enough for Miss Conway to give me a little good advice."

Mr. Lauriston looked at Rachel, who was slightly taken aback by the quickness with which her new friend had divined the feeling to which she thought she had hardly given utterance. "Very little, I fear," she said.

Adam smiled. "The quantity isn't the important thing," he replied; "and I've no doubt the quality was excellent."

"Miss Conway told me what she would do if she were a man," said Dick.

"Ah!" said Mr. Lauriston; "it's wonderful what good men women would be if they *were* men. But, thank Heaven, they are not!"

He strolled over to the fireplace as he spoke, and stood negligently warming one hand, which he spread out before the blaze, while he looked across at Rachel and Richard. The silence hardly lasted a moment, but his attitude and expression remained imprinted on her memory as a vivid picture, the slim, dark figure half turning towards her, the bright eyes resting on her companion and herself, and the fire at his side leaping and wavering in little tongues of red, and yellow, and blue. Almost instantly the coloured flames caught his eye, and he threw out his hand, with a slight, swift gesture towards them, and quoted softly—

“Is all our fire of shipwreck wood
Oak and pine?
Oh for the ills half understood,
The dim dead woe
Long ago.”

Dick arched his brows a little. “What’s all that?”

Rachel smiled at Mr. Lauriston. “I think your cousin likes his ships best in that condition,” she said.

“Oh, they are first-rate to make poetry about,” young Brett replied. “Especially, as you say, with bits of them burning to keep you warm meanwhile.”

Laura came in as he spoke, and the conversation became general; that is to say, she and Dick talked, while the other two were not conspicuously silent. Rachel more than once found herself looking, with a curious revival of interest, at Mr. Lauriston, as if a new light had fallen upon him, and revealed him afresh to her, more piquantly and perplexingly attractive than ever. Did he think, or, as Mr. Lauriston Brett had surmised, think nothing, of that closely haunting possibility of death, of which the younger man had spoken? She had uttered her fears four years earlier, but no word of his had ever crossed his lips. Perhaps he did not care. Rachel, looking at him, thought it very possible that he might not. That the story of his life had held one beautiful page of poetry and love she knew; but since the day when Death stooped over it and wrote *Finis* at the end of that chapter, she fancied that he had been turning the leaves with a languid, half-contemptuous curiosity. Perhaps he would not be sorry to close the book altogether if his summons came.

From him she looked at young Brett. With no relations of her own she seemed to have drifted into the home life of these Lauristons, and to have become a part of their circle. If they were not her people, she had none in the world; a thought so sad that she might be pardoned for shrinking from it, and welcoming the fancy that here was a new young kinsman arrived to greet her, a young fellow not without briskness and a certain originality, youthful enough to be treated boy fashion, and petted a little by herself as well as Laura. He had touched her by his eagerness in speaking of the motherless little child, who now first

appeared, a small, forlorn figure, not as yet very clearly defined, starting on the journey of life across the field of her vision. What was he like? She determined that she would ask young Brett, and at the same time would endeavour to learn something more of his own relations with Adam Lauriston. His half-defiant confidences piqued her curiosity as to his precise feelings towards his cousin.

"You must come and see us again soon," she said, when the young fellow rose to go. "Has Laura settled anything with you? And are you musical, too, like the rest of her friends?"

"Is that the qualification?" he inquired. "Oh, yes; I'm musical. They always put me down for a song when they have a penny reading at home. I'll come and sing you one of my penny-reading songs whenever you like, and Laura shall play the accompaniment."

"That will be delightful for both of us."

"And I'm always encored," said Dick. "The back benches encore me almost before I begin."

"You shall be encored—I promise it." As Miss Conway spoke, she perceived that he still had the chrysanthemum which he had been twirling and playing with as he talked.

"Are you looking after your property?" he asked, noting the direction of her glance. "Mayn't I keep it?"

"Oh, certainly," she said with a laugh. "That and as many more as you please."

"One's enough," he replied. "I'm going to wear it next my heart to remind me of your good advice. This has got a good scratchy sort of stem," he said, inspecting it. "I think I shall remember."

"Take another and make sure," said Rachel smiling; but he shook his head and went away, putting the flower in his buttonhole, and humming a tune very softly under his breath. She looked after him as he rejoined his cousin, detained a moment by Laura, who was questioning him about his plans for her favourite. Then with a backward glance and a smile from Mr. Lauriston, the two were gone, and Laura came back, eager to ask, "Isn't he a dear boy?" and to exclaim, "Oh, I knew you would like him!"

Rachel did like him, and was pleased when he came again, not once or twice, but often, hurrying in and out of the November fogs with an eager, animated face, warming his hands and chattering in the twilight before the big fire. He entertained them with descriptions of his adventures in search of suitable lodgings. He appeared to be somewhat fastidious, and to have given his cousin, who accompanied him, not a little trouble. "Why should I live in a hole?" he said. "I like to be comfortable; and most of these places are such grimy little holes."

"And what does Adam say?" Mrs. Latham inquired.

"Not much. He makes an introductory remark or two, and then looks out of the window. Presently I make a sign of disapproval, which he translates into a bland regret that the rooms won't do, and bows

himself out with the utmost politeness. The landlady looks after me with disconsolate yearnings, and we try another address."

"But, Dick," said Mrs. Latham, "you mustn't try Adam's patience too much. Won't he get tired of this, and think you unreasonable?"

The uncertain firelight revealed Dick shrugging his shoulders. "Very likely," he replied.

"But, Dick, you must remember that it is important that you should not displease him," she persisted in a low voice.

"Displease him? I shan't displease him. That's the advantage of having to do with a man who doesn't expect anything of you. He takes it for granted that I shall be unreasonable."

Rachel waited till she had a chance of saying to Dick, "If I were you, Mr. Lauriston *should* expect something of me."

"He wouldn't like it," said young Brett. "He is very good to me, but don't you see that what he likes is to get a shrug of the shoulders out of the business? If I were a model young man and deserved all his goodness, he would be obliged to take me seriously. Instead of which, I bet he's got half a dozen neat little maxims about ingratitude at the tip of his tongue, and I illustrate the lot."

She was standing near the window, and she turned towards it and looked out before replying. "And you are satisfied to have it so?" she asked.

"I can't tell you," said Dick. "I don't know, upon my word I don't. If it suits Lauriston——"

He was leaning idly against the end of a carved book-case, and he shifted his shoulders into a more comfortable position. The action seemed somehow to complete the unfinished sentence.

"Of course I have no business to say anything," Rachel began.

"Let us assume that you have," he said, with a gesture which conveyed the most generous permission.

"Then," said she, colouring, and looking at young Brett with an appealing earnestness in her grey eyes, "if I accepted a man's benefits, though he might expect nothing of me, I should expect something of myself."

Richard returned her gaze. Her softly flushed cheeks deserved his frank admiration. "It's Lauriston's fault," he said, half laughing. "He does good as if he couldn't help it and wasn't sure that it was so very good after all. How is one to take it in earnest?"

"Can't you?"

"Who could? Why, if he deserved to be canonised—perhaps he does, I don't say no—they couldn't do it. They couldn't make a saint of a man who shrugged his shoulders like that. It isn't good manners in pious company. If you wear a nimbus, you must keep your shoulders down, and Lauriston can't."

"Perhaps he might, if you gave him a chance," she persisted.

"Well, I never have, that's true. But, no!" and Dick shook his head as if it were white with seventy winters.

"He has had a great deal of trouble, hasn't he?" said Miss Conway. "His wife——"

"Oh, of course. Yes, very likely he would have been different if she had lived; but, as it is, he doesn't really care for anybody."

"But he is good all the same," she urged. "He has been good to me—he has helped me too."

"What, you are another?" said the young man. "Oh, but then I don't pity him. I'm sure he's paid more than he deserves."

"No, no!" she exclaimed, the more eagerly that she suddenly questioned whether her own gratitude was all that could be desired. Why had she undertaken to lecture Dick? She would have been thankful to speak out bluntly and frankly, and to confess that she had repaid Mr. Lauriston's goodness with an unsatisfactory hesitation, but something seemed to close her lips. If she could do no more for the man who had pledged himself to serve her, at least she owed it to him not to put that vague questioning into words. She answered truly yet ambiguously, as she was uneasily aware. "He isn't paid. I can't be half grateful enough," she said.

"Oh, the lucky fellow! I shan't trouble myself about my own shortcomings any more."

"And I won't trouble myself about them either," she answered, turning the whole question off with a laugh. "Why should I if you won't?"

Mrs. Latham, coming into the room and catching a glimpse of the pair, was struck with Rachel's look of youth. The stately style of dress which Miss Conway had adopted, seemed to be just a dainty masquerading as she stood and talked to Dick. One could see what a slim, girlish figure it was that held up those richly sombre folds; how young the eyes were with their clear shining; how young the delicately curved and tinted lips which smiled upon him as he faced her. Laura remarked as much to Mr. Lauriston, who had come in to look for his young cousin. They were going to dine out together that evening. "How young she looks!" said Laura.

Mr. Lauriston glanced rapidly, as if for form's sake, at Rachel and then at Laura herself, seeming to find the significance of the fact in her appreciation of it. He assented carelessly enough; but, as they all stood round the fire, it struck Rachel that he was rather more reserved than usual. Mrs. Latham had some sketches by one of her friends, and wished Adam to see a few. She called Dick to the other end of the room to help her to lift the portfolio and make a selection. The two who remained by the fire were silent for a minute, and then Mr. Lauriston spoke. "You like Richard? He interests you?"

"Yes, I like him," she answered frankly. "So do you, don't you?"

"Oh, yes, quite as much as is necessary; as much as he likes me.

Oh, you are quite right to like him, Miss Conway. He isn't a bad sort of fellow."

Rachel hesitated. "He told me that he owed a great deal to your kindness."

"Dear me!" said Mr. Lauriston. "I hope he won't distress himself about that. People who remind themselves to be grateful are apt to expect so much more."

"I don't think he deserves that you should say that of him."

"Perhaps not." There was a pause. "His sentiments are exactly what they ought to be, then?"

"Oh, I don't say that. I'm not going to answer for Mr. Lauriston Brett's sentiments. But at any rate he is honest, I think."

"Yes," said Mr. Lauriston, "he is honest enough. He has more wit than most of them; wit enough to see that honesty, not the affectation of honesty, is the best policy. And he has secured you for his advocate—he's a lucky fellow."

The words were uttered with a rapid and spontaneous intonation, which for the moment was curiously like Richard's own. "Why," Rachel exclaimed hastily, "that's what he said of you just now!"

Mr. Lauriston laughed. "Ah! but not for the same reason."

She coloured. "Something not altogether unlike it," she answered, and met his eyes courageously.

"I know," he said. "Miss Conway, there is a type of conscientious gratitude which doesn't expect anything more, and is only dissatisfied with itself. Don't cultivate it on my account, especially as I don't deserve any."

"You don't like people to be grateful to you?"

"I don't see why they should be."

"But if they see it, if they feel grateful——"

"Yes," Mr. Lauriston replied, "but they don't."

There was a brief silence. Miss Conway felt that protestations would probably land her in falsehood. He smiled, enjoying her perplexity. "You make gratitude very difficult," she said at last.

"Well, you at least have no occasion for any. Nor has Richard. I'm not exacting, I hope, and I really have done very little for him. I know what the idea was; when he was a small boy his people hoped that I should not marry, and that I should be good enough to die quickly, and then he might have been my heir."

"Would he have been?" she questioned hurriedly, thinking only of the light the answer might throw on his feelings. "Oh, but I ought not to ask; forgive me!"

"Why should you not ask?" he said. "I think he probably would. Of course one always has an impulse to disappoint stupid people who think they are managing one's affairs very cleverly. But I think I might have got over that. After all," said Mr. Lauriston, looking straight before him, "disappointing idiotic people is a poor

kind of pleasure, as vulgar and commonplace as their own schemes. And it isn't even amusing, especially when one is dead. Yes; I think Dick had a chance, but of course when I married there was an end of it."

"Of course," she assented. "But you did like him, then, better than those other relations of yours?"

Mr. Lauriston began to laugh. "My other relations! Dick has been confidential, I see."

"Do you mind?"

"Mind your hearing of the Joneses and the Polhills, for I suppose those are the people you mean? Not if it amuses you. It never occurred to me that it could. They amuse me a little sometimes, but they bore me quite as much."

"Are they your nearest relations?"

"Except my sisters, yes."

"And you don't like them?"

"Oh, yes," he said, and shrugged his shoulders. "They are very good people. I think myself that we should be just as happy if we never met again; but we don't say so, at least they don't. Do you think I am bound to love my relations, Miss Conway?"

"No; but you help them. I should not like to help or be helped without interest or sympathy."

Mr. Lauriston looked down. "I'm very glad to be of use to them," he said. "And, really, I think a warmer feeling might be inconvenient. Lauriston Polhill is a High Church parson; don't you think it would be rather terrible to be fondly loved by a High Church parson if one didn't share his views? I never tried, but I fancy so. As it is, Polhill doesn't trouble himself much about me. When we meet, he only goes against wrong in the abstract, and deplores the spirit of the age; one can always do that. And when he wants money to restore his church he takes an archæological view of the matter, which makes it pleasant for both parties. Oh, I don't dislike Polhill."

"And Mr. Lauriston Jones?"

"Jones lives near Dolgelly. He is a lawyer, a very hardworking man. Most of his clients are dissenting farmers, and he gets on uncommonly well with them. If I were a small Wesleyan farmer I think I should like Jones very much. I'm sorry I can't say more. Perhaps I am not naturally enthusiastic. But I think it is not altogether my fault. Jones is hardly the man to inspire enthusiasm."

"You help them because they are your relations, then, without caring for them?" said Rachel.

"If you like to put it so. They think that the money which came to me ought to have gone to them. It is rather hard on them from their point of view, and they are quite right to take what they can get; why not? Perhaps I should have felt it hard if I had been left out in the cold."

"And would you have taken what you could get?" she asked with a laugh.

"From Lauriston Polhill? Or Jones? Well, no; I think not." He spoke very softly and moderately, and yet her answer was not inappropriate.

"No; you would not! That is what I say; you give, and you scorn. It amuses you to help these people and Mr. Brett, and you despise them all the time."

He flashed a bright, questioning glance at her. "Certainly Dick amuses me at times," he said quietly. "The others—well, not so much. But I don't think I despise them. I'm sure I don't see why I should. They work harder than I do, both Polhill and Jones."

Rachel looked down in dissatisfied silence. She could hardly feel any very ardent sympathy for Messrs. Polhill and Jones. Was she troubled for Richard, or for herself, or for Mr. Lauriston? Was it true that his old love had taken all? Could it be that, as Richard had said, he only cared to get a shrug of his shoulders, and an illustration of his little French maxims, out of anything that was left to him on earth? What little maxim did she serve to illustrate with her foolish confidence? Was there some portrait in two lines and a half, drawn with the finest of pens and a tiny drop of corrosive ink, which called her up before him as he turned the page? She coloured at the thought, as if her bodily presence had been compelled to answer to his spell.

"I'm sorry I displease you, Miss Conway," he said after a pause. "This is rather an earnest way of looking at a very trifling question. For, after all, if one has a little money to spare, it is the easiest thing in the world to give, so long as one does not take your view of the matter, and mix it up with one's feelings; then it becomes serious. That I should help Dick a little—I really don't know why he was obliged to tell you of it—doesn't seem to me at all serious."

"Isn't it serious for him?"

Mr. Lauriston smiled. "He takes it very easily. Don't you think he does?"

Rachel looked across the room at the young fellow, who was stooping to tie a portfolio. "Yes," she said, "I think Mr. Brett takes it very easily indeed."

"Did I hear my name?" Dick inquired, straightening himself, and pushing his hair from his forehead. "The exhibition is ready, ladies and gentlemen."

"Shall we have a look at it?" said Mr. Lauriston, standing aside for Rachel to pass between the chairs, on which the others had set up some of the sketches. But, as he did so, he glanced at his young cousin, who welcomed Miss Conway with an exaggerated bow. It was a questioning, half-ironical glance, and yet Mr. Lauriston had never looked at Dick so seriously before.

His eye travelled quickly round the row of landscapes. Mrs. Latham

turned one a little more to the light. "That isn't kind," he said gently. "It was better as it was."

She replaced it. "It seemed to be so very much in the shadow," she said. "And I thought it was the best of them all."

"So did I." He stood stroking his moustache. "It isn't as it was, now—no, never mind, you can't put it back. This man is a great friend of yours, Laura?"

"Yes; he is a very nice fellow, and so handsome, too. Don't you call him very handsome, Rachel? But you may say what you please; he can bear your criticism by deputy."

"He wants to sell these, naturally. So should I want to sell them if I had done them. It would be a great thing to be able to send them home."

"I haven't found him a purchaser to-day, I see," said Mrs. Latham. "Rachel said you wouldn't like them, but I had promised to show them to you."

"I'm very sorry," Mr. Lauriston replied. "But really I haven't a place where I could hang them."

"Come, I can't tell him that," Laura protested.

"Well, it's true. There's Redlands, but I haven't a house where I never go. Tell him what you please. He doesn't depend on these things for his living?" said Mr. Lauriston suddenly, in a lower voice.

Dick meanwhile questioned Rachel. "Tell me what you were saying about me?"

"No good. Listeners never hear any good of themselves."

"But they hear something of themselves, and I heard nothing."

"So much the better for you, evidently. You had better be content."

"Oh, but you wouldn't say any harm of me," said young Brett. "Nobody does. I don't know how it is, but everybody seems to see how nice I really am."

"Perhaps I haven't had time to find it out," Miss Conway replied. "You must make allowance for my dulness."

"I make allowance for *you*!" Dick exclaimed, rather effectively.

"But don't you feel as if you were going to like me very much?"

"Wait and see. At any rate I'm glad you don't expect love at first sight."

"Well," said Dick, "I mustn't expect you to own to it."

"Come, are you ready?" Mr. Lauriston asked, breaking into the conversation. Young Brett went away very meekly, with a reproachful glance at Rachel.

"You never told me," he said.

CHAPTER XIII.

DICK'S OPINIONS.

DURING the next week Mr. Lauriston bestowed a little attention on Dick himself, and a great deal more on Dick considered with regard to Miss Conway. As for Dick himself, his cousin promptly decided that he was very much what he had always supposed him to be. But with regard to Miss Conway he was interesting.

He had not imagined that the boy would attract her as he had evidently done. There were plenty of men, both handsomer and cleverer than young Brett, who came and went in the house, and on whom Rachel's beautiful, passionless eyes rested indifferently. It was Dick whose coming woke a laughing light in those clear depths. It might be only a passing gleam, but Lauriston saw it for him, and for no one else.

He did not misunderstand her feelings. It was the young fellow's position with regard to Laura which had given Rachel a right to look upon him with easier friendliness, and to lecture him, scheme for him, pet him, without an afterthought. But her very readiness to make much of Dick opened Mr. Lauriston's eyes to the strangely-repressed life which she had been leading for the last four years. He knew well that she had accepted the greatest renunciation of all when she gave up Charles Eastwood, and all that Charles Eastwood had meant to her girlish fancy. But until Dick came he had not realised how utterly alone she stood, cut off from every tie. She could not be a wife, nor a mother, and she was neither daughter nor sister. Dick had come with something of the charm of a boy brother, and the beautiful woman, far above him to all seeming, had stooped and stretched her hands to him. It was natural enough, Mr. Lauriston determined. Dick was not a bad fellow for a brother. He considered the matter in a finely impartial spirit, and decided that it was not at all remarkable. Few things were.

He did not forget that he had himself once proposed to be Rachel's brother, as far as brotherhood can be proposed, and that she had rejected him. But, as he clearly perceived, the cases were not parallel. Rachel, as a shy girl, might well refuse the name of brother, implying a possible assumption of authority, to a man who was older and more experienced than herself; and yet, as a woman, welcome the dependent boy. It was natural enough, Mr. Lauriston repeated to himself, as he sat over the fire one night when Dick had gone to bed. After all, a man could only give what he had, he reflected, while he gazed at the bright coals. He saw his own influence on Rachel's life with cruel distinctness. He had helped her, with a half-melancholy smile, to find the one joy, the delight in beauty which she could fitly share with him. But, though beauty was unchangeable, eyes might fail, and brains become obscured; the shadows of madness and death pursued the worshippers and fell across

the sanctuary. And beyond that, as far as he knew, Rachel had nothing—no hopes, no enthusiasms, no ambitions. “Now, if I had been a fanatical philanthropist,” mused Mr. Lauriston, “or a great preacher, or an ardent believer in woman’s rights, or even if I had been Dick!”

He threw himself back in his chair and smiled, clasping his hands behind his head. In so doing he touched the little ring he wore, and instantly unclasped his hands to look at it. “I have done my best,” he said, half aloud. “My best!” The smile still lingered as he repeated the words, but it vanished for a moment as he raised his hand, and touched the ring lightly with his lips.

He was smiling again almost directly, however, and looking into the red recesses of the fire. “If I had been Dick I should have been teasing her to set up a stage in the back drawing-room, and to get up an idiotic farce, with a comic part in it for me, or I should have been begging her to give a ball, at which I might appear in a gorgeous historical costume. Well, why not? Other women are amused by these things; why should not Rachel try them? Perhaps she will, for Dick’s sake. And—and—how much more will she do for Dick’s sake?”

Many people laugh at the idea of friendship between man and woman, and hold that the affection of brother and sister without the tie of blood is merely one of Dan Cupid’s disguises. Mr. Lauriston was not of that opinion. His belief was that such artificial barriers are real, honestly limiting the love that is bounded by them, but necessarily slight and imperfect. A mere spadeful of earth will determine the course of a trickling thread of water as effectually as a mountain range, provided there is no flood. The danger lies in the possibility of a quickened rush, before time has deepened and assured the faintly-marked channels. If that should come, the torrent will overflow its narrow bounds, and hurry away in its natural course, after which it will be useless enough to look for any trace of the little wall—brotherly devotion, or Platonic affection, or whatever its name may have been. But it was once a reality, nevertheless. Mr. Lauriston, knowing how the wonted outlets of tenderness had been denied to Rachel, could look on her liking for Richard as something altogether fresh and pure, not even unconsciously insincere. It did not harm his ideal, for she was not wronging hers.

It was quite true that Dick had been eager for private theatricals, and eloquent about the capabilities of the back drawing-room. But his talks with Rachel were not always frivolous. He could be serious in his own way, and could speak with a very youthful frankness. He informed her on one occasion that he disapproved of melancholy.

“Well, I suppose most people do,” she replied.

“Then why do they nurse it up so, and write books about it, and put it into pictures?” Dick demanded. “I hate it. Let’s be happy, I say.”

“Suppose we can’t be?”

“Then let’s make believe to be; make believe very much.”

"Better be honest and own the truth," she said; "what is the good of making believe?"

"All the good in the world. What is the good of petting your misery? If you are fighting with it, and jumping on it to keep it down, it does give you some exercise at any rate."

Miss Conway matched a thread of silk to the colour of her work. "Are you treating some secret sorrow of your own in this violent fashion of the moment?" she asked.

"I? No, not at present. But if it comes, I'll do my best not to think about it. And—of course you'll think me a brute, Miss Conway——"

"Very likely. What now?"

"I won't think of other people's troubles either! If I can help anybody, all right; I'm your man for any reasonable amount of self-sacrifice; but if I can't, I can't, and it's no use being low-spirited about it."

"Well, that may be a very good way to treat them."

"Yes," said Dick, "you must tell me something to do. I can't go thinking about you, and sighing and sobbing over you."

"Pray don't do anything of the kind over me," said Rachel.

"Oh, *you!*" exclaimed the young fellow, and stood smiling and looking at her; "well, it would be a damp and draughty sort of business; you wouldn't like it."

"Not at all."

"If I wanted to reform the world——" he began pensively.

"To reform the world?"

"Why, yes," he said with a slightly aggrieved expression. "I'm modest enough, I know, but I can't quite suppose I'm such a fool that I couldn't improve the arrangement of things in general if people would only attend to me."

"Well, I am attending to you. Go on, please. If you wanted to reform the world——"

"I'd set all the parsons to preach that it was wicked to be very unhappy. No, I wouldn't," said Dick, "I'd get Mrs. Grundy to say it was improper. That would be better."

"And pray what good would that do?"

"Lots," he replied concisely. "People are desperately grieved because they think they ought to be. If they knew it wasn't the thing they wouldn't be."

"Oh, if you believe your fellow-creatures are all such hypocrites!"

"Hypocrites? Well, I don't know. It's rather a nice sort of feeling, I think, when you come to look into it. Somebody you are fond of dies, and you are really sorry, so sorry that you'd like her to have the best of everything. You know how miserable people are in books, and you are sure she deserves a first-class inconsolable mourner as

much as the best of them. So you set to work to keep your feelings well harrowed up. I think it's very nice of you, but it makes it dreary for other folks, and it doesn't really do her any good." He paused, apparently looking into space. "Take Lauriston," he said; "I suppose he's an instance."

"But do you mean that it isn't real in his case?" said Rachel.

"No, I don't mean anything of the kind. Only I don't think anybody ever was so sorry as some people want to be. I say," said Richard, "were you ever sorry for any one without feeling ashamed of yourself for forgetting all about it every now and then? But if it wasn't the thing to be sorrowful you'd be glad, like a small boy when he forgets himself, and gets ten good week-day minutes right in the middle of a Sunday sermon."

Miss Conway was thoughtful. "I'm afraid Mr. Lauriston's sorrow is more real than we know."

"It may be," he said.

"Did you ever think," she continued, "how sad it would be to walk about alive, with all one's happiness shut up in one's heart—dead?"

"I don't want to fancy it. It would be horrible."

"Only," said Rachel, "Mr. Lauriston has nothing to fear. Nothing can touch his happiness." She was thinking, under her broken words, of other words more musical—

"All things were dead asleep
That I have loved, all buried in soft beds
And sealed with dreams and visions"—

but she did not utter them. "Nothing can touch it," she repeated. "He has only to wait a little while, and some day he will die."

"And go nowhere! That's what he thinks, you know."

Rachel stopped short, startled by an involuntary glance into that bottomless gulf of night. In her sudden stillness, as if life had been for a moment arrested, she was like a beautiful picture, gazing with clear, wide eyes and parted lips. After a moment she recovered herself with a long sigh. "I know," she said; "only he doesn't say it so bluntly and certainly. Well, I suppose he would tell you that that was the safest of all."

"Perhaps," said Richard. "But, at that rate, isn't it worse than folly to spend his life in looking back to what is past and over? No, no; I like a bit of verse I found once; do you remember it?" And, looking at Rachel, he began in his musical young voice to repeat—

"Love, forget me when I'm gone—
When the tree is overthrown
Let its place be digged and sown
O'er with grass; when that is grown,
The very place shall be unknown—
So court I oblivion;
So I charge you by our love,
Love, forget me when I'm gone."

Raising his voice a little, Dick continued—

“Love of him that lies in clay——”

“Dick reciting poetry!” exclaimed Mrs. Latham, coming blithely into the room. “I wouldn’t have believed it, but the door was ajar, and you were distinctly audible in the hall. Are those the words of one of your penny-reading songs?”

“That would account for it, wouldn’t it?” he replied, pink to the very roots of his hair, and looking very boyish indeed. “But I don’t think those words have been set to music. I found ’em in a magazine.”

“And learnt them by heart, and were repeating them with a great deal of spirit. Well, wonders will never cease. Don’t let me interrupt.”

But Dick, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other, could not have uttered another line, and fled discomfited, leaving Laura laughing, and Rachel haunted by the lingering cadence—

“So court I oblivion.”

Mr. Lauriston was the next to report a wonder. It was after Christmas, when the days were beginning to grow full of hope and newly-stirring life. He came in one afternoon to bring a piece of music Laura wanted; and, having given it to her, he took a chair near the window. “Have you seen Dick lately?” he asked.

“Last Tuesday, I think it was,” said Rachel.

“It’s an extraordinary thing,” Mr. Lauriston continued, “and perhaps you may not believe it, but Dick is actually working.”

“Why, of course he is working,” said Laura. “To hear you, any one would think that he had never worked before!”

“Well, did he ever?”

“Of course he did.”

Mr. Lauriston leaned back and looked thoughtful. “Did he indeed?” he said at last. “Well, I don’t know why he should have hidden it from me so sedulously. I shouldn’t have disapproved, provided he was careful not to injure his health.”

Laura deigned no reply, and after a moment he went on. “I wonder what has caused this sudden outbreak of energy.” He looked round and his eyes lingered for a moment on Rachel, with a glance half of amusement, half of pity, for the industrious boy.

“I’m very glad,” she said. The sweet gravity of her answering smile told of a protecting interest in Dick’s work.

“Are you going to preach the sacredness of labour?” he asked.

“Not to you,” she answered quickly. “I don’t know about Mr. Brett, but I do suspect you of pretending to be much idler than you are.”

“I’m delighted to hear it. To sit doing nothing in one of your comfortable chairs, listening to an assurance that one is really very

industrious, is a most enviable fate. Poor Dick, now, is toiling away, and we only half believe in him after all. Laura looks daggers at me; but it is true, isn't it, Miss Conway?"

Rachel coloured a little. "I don't know," she said. "But at any rate I may be allowed to hope."

There was a moment's silence. Mr. Lauriston, still leaning back with his laziest air, was not unconscious of the faint blush which was fading from Rachel's face. Presently she turned to him. "Suppose I were to ask you a favour?" she said.

He looked up with quick, inquiring eyes. "You never do."

"Then I will now." But still she hesitated, and the colour which had gone came back in a rosy wave.

"It is not for yourself," he said. "Is it for Dick?"

"Not precisely. Mr. Lauriston, will you let your little boy come and stay with us—with Laura and me—for a few weeks?"

The question came suddenly after the previous hesitation. A school-girl could hardly have put it more bluntly and shyly. Mr. Lauriston leaned forward with one hand on the arm of his chair; a flash of expression lighted his face for an instant, and was gone. To Rachel it seemed that, had it lingered a moment longer, she would have looked into his very heart; but the illumination was too brief. She thought, doubtfully, that she saw him startled from temporary forgetfulness to the consciousness of underlying pain, and she shrank back. "My boy?" he said, and then he smiled.

"Not if you don't like it!" she exclaimed hurriedly. "Perhaps you would rather not trust him to us? But we would take great care of him—Laura and I—if you didn't mind."

"Mind!" he repeated. "But you are paying him a great compliment—this son of mine. Why should I mind? But, believe me, Miss Conway, it is you who wouldn't like it."

"May I try?" she persisted, intent on her purpose, and yet troubled. "I think I should like it."

He bowed. "So be it," he said. "But you are not going to ask me to believe that Laura wants a child here?"

"Certainly not for my own pleasure," said Mrs. Latham. "But if I am not responsible for him, I've no objection if it amuses Rachel."

"And you?" he said. "Do you care for children, then?" He looked curiously at her. He had always thought that she shrank from them, lest something of her shadow should fall across their little worlds. But her benumbed life seemed to be quickening in more than one direction, while he stood by with nothing to do but to watch it. "Did Dick suggest this?" he asked in a lower tone.

She answered half reluctantly. "He spoke of it, first, but since then I have been thinking of it. I should like it, but I don't think you do. You must forgive me if I ought not to have asked you."

"Why should you not ask me? I will write at once to my sisters,

and you shall have him when you please, and send him back when you please—the next day, if you like.”

“I don’t think I shall want to send him back the next day,” she said with a meditative smile, and her eyes wandered round the room as if she already saw the little figure there. “I don’t even know his name!” she exclaimed.

“William. I call him Will.”

“What is he like?” Mrs. Latham inquired. “He used to be a poor little fellow.”

“Oh, he is fairly well now. Not strong, they tell me, but I never hear of much amiss.”

“And has he grown up a pretty child?”

“Very pretty.” He seemed to consider a moment before he added, “He is singularly like his mother.”

“Mr. Brett said he was like you,” said Rachel. “His eyes——”

“Well, only his eyes, then. Yes, I believe his eyes are like mine. But he has his mother’s look and smile.”

Some callers came in, and Mr. Lauriston rose to take his leave. When he would have shaken hands with Rachel she delayed him, drawing him a little aside. “Mr. Lauriston,” she said, standing before him with her head slightly bowed, “I feel as if I had done wrong in asking my favour this afternoon.”

“Why so?”

“Because you do not like my plan.”

“Upon my word,” he answered quickly, “I have no reason to do otherwise than like it very much indeed.”

“Then you dislike it without a reason.”

“I do not dislike it, if, as Laura says, it amuses you.”

“Well,” said Rachel, not raising her eyes to his face, “if there is anything wrong, if I ought not to have asked—you must remember that it is all my fault; you must blame nobody but me.”

“I blame nobody at all. Only I’m sorry for you. He will probably break a good deal of your blue china and your Venetian glass. And you will have to go to the Polytechnic, and the Tower, and St. Paul’s, and Madame Tussaud’s, and you won’t like it.”

“There I differ from you,” said Miss Conway. “You’ll hear of me up in the whispering-gallery, and down in the diving-bell. And I’ve never been to Madame Tussaud’s, but I’m convinced I shall delight in it.”

Their eyes met, and for a moment he looked at her fixedly. She was flushed and brightly eager, while he seemed slihter and frailer than ever, with a duskier contrast of hair and eyes to the pallor of his face. “You are quite right,” he said, “I believe you will enjoy it immensely.” And, with a smiling farewell, he went out of the room, as softly, to Rachel’s fancy, as if he had been a shadow.

That evening he sat writing the letter he had promised. Richard,

who was with him, prowled restlessly about the room, and finally paused opposite an uncurtained window, and stood gazing at a crescent moon which had risen high above the neighbouring roofs and chimneys. Presently he glanced over his shoulder, and saw that his cousin was leaning back in his chair, balancing the pen in his fingers, and surveying a neatly-written note. The young fellow fixed his eyes on the moon again, and suddenly broke the silence.

"Is it true," he asked, "that Miss Conway was once engaged to be married?"

Mr. Lauriston dipped his pen in the ink, and dotted the "i" in "Eliza." "I believe so," he said.

"How long ago was that?"

"About five years ago—four or five."

"And she broke it off because there was madness in her family?"

"So I have understood."

"Then she will never marry?"

"Well," Mr. Lauriston replied, glancing over his letter, "I don't see how the circumstances can alter. Such a reason, if it is good for anything at all, is good once and for all, it seems to me."

Young Brett continued to observe the heavens. "Of course it is, but the question is whether it is good for anything at all," he said.

Mr. Lauriston was silent.

"What do you think about it?" Dick persisted.

"My opinion is of very little importance. I'm not engaged to be married, and I believe the Lauristons are tolerably sane."

"I didn't want to know what you thought about it for yourself, of course. But suppose you had been that man?"

"What man?"

"The man Miss Conway was going to marry."

"Well," said Lauriston, "I wasn't, you see." He was frowning a little at Dick's back, as if this questioning displeased him, and yet he seemed unwilling to silence his young cousin altogether.

"No, I know you weren't. But if you had been?"

"See here," said Lauriston. "Apparently you are bent on discussing the question in the abstract. So be it, but in that case you may as well leave Miss Conway out of it."

Dick turned his back on the moon, and sat on the window sill. "Very well, I will. Suppose it were in a novel——" he began.

"H'm—now you are going to the other extreme."

"Well, people can say more in novels."

"Naturally. They talk in pen and ink, and have time to turn their sentences."

"Yes; but that isn't all. There's a lot of fine talk which sounds like books and like nothing else. One doesn't want to rant," said Richard. He had a young Englishman's shyness of anything like impassioned speech, unless, indeed, it were uttered professionally with one eye on a jury.

"Well, take your hero of romance," said Mr. Lauriston. "He doesn't acquiesce in his dismissal, I suppose? And what do you propose that he should say?"

"Why," Dick replied, speaking hesitatingly and clumsily at first, but quickening to warmth and energy as he went on, "I suppose it wouldn't be any good to remind her what an awfully lonely, melancholy life it would be. Lots of women are old maids, of course, but that's different. Perhaps they never cared for any one so, or perhaps they think 'we may be happy yet;' anyhow, they are free to take any love or kindness which may happen to come their way. But she would be like a nun without a vocation. Only it wouldn't be any good to tell her so—women *will* think they ought to sacrifice themselves."

Mr. Lauriston, attentive and assenting, smiled approval of Dick's discovery.

"And the hero mustn't plead for his own happiness either, I suppose," said young Brett. "If she makes up her mind to bear the pain of parting he should bear his share without torturing her. At least, I think so. But that is taking it for granted that they ought to part, which is exactly what I doubt."

Mr. Lauriston, leaning forward with his elbows on his writing-table, propped his chin on his hand, and waited. Dick drew a long breath and went on.

"Why should they part, except for their children's sake? For the man wouldn't want to leave her because she was in danger—he would love her a hundred times better. He stand aside and be safe! Not he! He'd feel that in all the world there was no place for him but by her side. And as for their children, I say that they'd be better and happier with a noble woman for their mother, and a father who wasn't afraid to risk something for love's sake, than if they came of prudent folks—men who want to be safe and comfortable, and who marry commonplace, narrow-minded girls. There are worse things in the world, I take it, than a possible touch of madness in one's blood. Better that than meanness, and vulgarity, and selfishness—and your sane people can be mean and selfish enough—the more selfish the saner, according to some folks. Just look at scores and hundreds of the women who are wives and mothers, and think what a wife and mother might be!"

Dick had promised to leave Miss Conway out of the discussion, but perhaps he had not quite succeeded in doing so. It was no grave consideration of an abstract question which hurried his pulses and his speech. And it was no typical figure of a possible wife and mother which was called up in his listener's mind, but Rachel Conway in flesh and blood, with a ring on her hand—a happier ring than that black remembrance which she wore—Rachel, loved and loving, the mistress of a nobly-ordered home. Mr. Lauriston recalled Dick's "Suppose you had been the man—the man she was going to marry," and smiled, remembering the reality which was not so poetical as the lad imagined. What

would the parting interview have been like, he wondered, if Charles Eastwood had chanced to be Richard Lauriston Brett, with his boyish worship shining in his eyes?

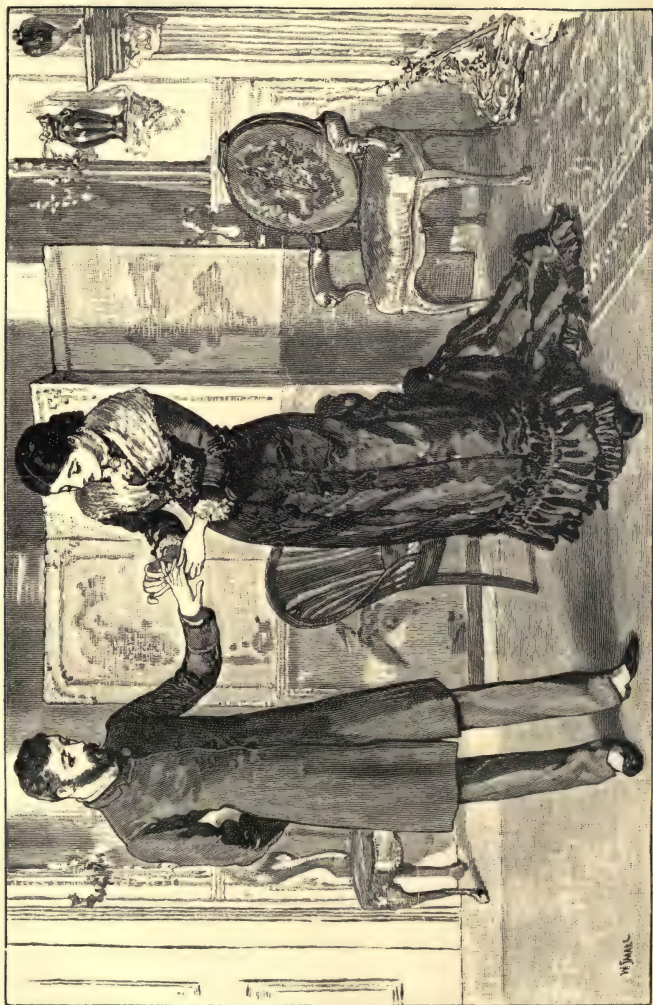
"Why shouldn't a man say that, only say it better?" Dick demanded.

"He might," said Mr. Lauriston. "Undoubtedly he might. But, in my opinion, he should first be very sure that he was right, and then he should think twice before he urged a woman to give up her ideal. To persuade her that she was doing right would be one thing; if he could do that, and do it thoroughly—well and good. But to persuade her to do what she thought wrong would be another. Add but one grain of remorse to her burden, and it would grow heavier, and the man who laid it on her couldn't lighten it by a featherweight. Talk of helping her—it is sheer folly! How could he help her? And what would he have given her in exchange? It is a bad bargain for a woman when she sells her ideal for a love which must lose something of its reverence in the transaction. The man's feeling may be just as strong, or stronger, with pity filling up all loss; but she will know the difference, and he can't help it. He could give her his heart's blood if she wanted it, but not the honour which he once gave. He should consider that."

Dick had argued with more force than was expressed by his actual words. Tone, look, and manner all helped to convey the overplus of meaning. Mr. Lauriston, on the other hand, answered with a readiness which suggested no passionate effort, but rather the simple utterance of familiar thoughts. He spoke with decision, as he might have spoken of Free-trade, or the Ballot, or any other interesting subject on which he had made up his mind. But Dick felt that his cousin was carrying the question away from Miss Conway, and that his level voice sounded calmly impersonal.

"Consider all that!" he said. "Good Lord! what a cold-blooded fellow he would be!"

The other started a little. "Ah?" he said, interrogatively. "I wasn't thinking of him, I was thinking of her. Cold-blooded? Yes, very likely." He got up, strolled across to the hearthrug, and lighted a cigarette. "Well, you can have your hero and heroine exactly to your mind—in your novel, Dick!"



AND HERSELF THRUST IT BACK ON HIS FINGER.

W. J. B. C.

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Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER XIV.

OF THE NEW WORLD.



A COUPLE of days later Mr. Lauriston arrived to call on Mrs. Latham, and found her on the threshold, just going out. "Give me a minute," he said. "I have a dozen words to say to you."

"I could say fifty words in a minute," she replied, as she led the way to the dining-room.

"Yes; but in the minute I will pick out the dozen that are essential." His communication, when made, did not much exceed the estimated length.

"Rachel will be surprised," said Laura.

He paused before replying. "She may be—for a minute," he said. "I don't think, however, she will say fifty words about it."

"Rachel's words mean a good deal," his cousin remarked.

"Well, I will pay them due attention. I shall find her upstairs, I suppose, or is she out?"

"No; she isn't out." It was Mrs. Latham's turn to hesitate for a scarcely appreciable interval. "I left Dick there when I came away."

"Then I shall not be much surprised if I find him there still."

"He hasn't been here for four or five days," she continued, "until this afternoon."

Mr. Lauriston arched his brows. "Indeed! He is welcome to come four or five times a day, if it pleases you and Miss Conway."

"I thought you might say he was wasting his time."

"Why should you think I would be so atrociously rude?"

"Somehow it nearly always happens that you come just when he does."

"Tiresome for Dick, that," said Mr. Lauriston. "But I can't help it. It is Destiny; I have nothing whatever to do with it. It is no business of mine to take care of him."

There was something pointed in the last words. "Do you think he needs it?" Mrs. Latham asked.

"I don't think about it," he replied. "It is not in the bond that I ever should think about Dick."

"Well, so long as you are not displeased with him," she began.

"Oh, as to that," said Mr. Lauriston, while he escorted her to the carriage, "he will be able to let you know when I am."

He saw her drive off, and then went upstairs. The drawing-room door stood partly open, so that he walked in without touching it, and paused just inside for one of those periods of time which may be reckoned as years or moments, according to the system of calculation. This particular space held a low ripple of happy laughter, an impulsive gesture, a couple of sentences, and a penetrating gaze.

Richard sat at the table, drawing. He had a pleasant little knack of caricature, and no self-consciousness. Rachel had evidently paused in passing, and now stooped slightly, with one hand resting on the back of his chair, and her eyes fixed on his work. Little smiles of amusement passed like sunshine over her face, and ended in the soft laughter which arrested Mr. Lauriston on the threshold. He gazed at her as she stood there, unconscious of his presence, happy, healthful, frankly young. The gracious virginal figure seemed to have stepped out of the cold belt of shadow, which was the boundary of his dominion, into golden sunshine where he could not follow her. That momentary glimpse showed him the radiant possibilities which an unblighted life would have held for Rachel. He understood, by some subtle divination, how gladly the swift clear blood was coursing in her veins; and when Richard, wanting a better view of his sketch, threw himself back in his chair so suddenly that he brushed her arm, Mr. Lauriston felt what a thrill of warm life must run through the boy at that touch, and what a sweet breathing must be in the air about his head. For his own part, he stood fearing to stir, and looked at her as if the Rachel Conway he had known were dead, and risen again in joy.

"Don't touch it!" she exclaimed, with laughter in her voice. "Don't spoil it! It's lovely!"

"Glad you like it," said Dick. "I don't think it's very bad, considering."

She shivered suddenly, as if she felt an unwelcome chill, but, before she could glance at the door, Mr. Lauriston stepped forward. Dick jumped up. "Hullo," he said, "here's Lauriston!" Rachel turned swiftly and confronted the new comer, who stood with the blue and white of the spring sky gleaming through the window at his back. There was no need for him to question whether the Rachel he had known still lived; the shadow of his presence fell across her, and she met him with the old remembrance in her eyes.

They greeted each other almost in silence, and he nodded carelessly to Dick. Then he looked down, smiling. He had found time to appreciate the irony of the whole matter, the devotion of years rewarded with the power of haunting her like a spectre. The mere sight of him, without word or touch, called up the secret terror of her soul.

"Look!" she said, a little hurriedly, holding out the sketch; "don't you call that good?"

"Oh, don't show it to him!" young Brett exclaimed. "He draws better than I do; he'll have no mercy on my humble effort."

"Is that true?" said Rachel, with the direct simplicity with which she always spoke to Mr. Lauriston. "Why have I never known? Do you draw better?"

"Yes," he said. "Better, and therefore not at all."

"Which means?" she questioned; while Dick murmured, "I told you so!"

"Which means that I know enough not to play with what should be a life's work if it is anything. Give me that"—he took the paper from her hands, and scrutinised the sketch of the feeblest of Laura's warbling friends. "It is clever, but it is the idlest play." ("I told you so!" said Dick again.) "I could draw better, but, at the same time, I could not do that. Dick has the advantage of me in audacity, and things strike him, amuse him. No; I could not do that."

"Why not do something better, then?"

He laughed suddenly, more positively than she had ever heard him laugh before, and shook his head. "I had more teaching than Dick ever had," he continued after a pause. "When I was a lad I had a vague idea of becoming an artist. But Fate decreed that I should be a country squire instead."

"You don't look much like a squire," said young Brett. He was sharpening a pencil, but he cast a swift glance at his cousin as he spoke. There was always an indescribable something of shadowy picturesqueness and grace about Lauriston, which is not a characteristic of the typical country gentleman. "I'll tell you what," said Dick, "you would do well for a study in black and white."

"It was a pity you weren't an artist, I think," said Rachel.

"No; I should have failed. I lacked the necessary faith in myself."

"Even then?"

"I think I partly knew myself, or occasionally suspected myself, even then."

"But you don't know yourself, you never believe in yourself enough!" exclaimed Dick. "You are clever; you might do anything."

"Not I."

"Did you *never* believe in yourself, Mr. Lauriston?" Rachel asked in a lowered voice.

He was smiling at the questioning and the frankly-expressed opinions of these young people, but when she spoke he looked at her with quick attention. "Once," he said. "Yes; I did once."

She understood in a moment that it was his wife's faith in him which taught him an answering faith in himself.

"You did?" said Dick. "And what were you going to do then?"

"Upon my word I can hardly say what I wasn't going to do. It was a magnificent sensation while it lasted, as bright and buoyant"—he hesitated for a comparison—"as if I had changed my head for one of those air-balls the children buy."

Dick laughed, but Rachel looked down. "Well, I must be off," said the young fellow abruptly. Perhaps, being as quick as a summer bird to detect a change in the atmosphere, he felt instinctively that he was not wanted now that Lauriston had come, or possibly a glance from his cousin had made the matter even more clear to him. At any rate he was very determined to go.

"Shall I see you this evening?" Lauriston called after him.

Dick, on the threshold, hesitated. "Did you want me?"

"You were going somewhere else? No; I don't want you."

"Because I daresay I could get off," young Brett began.

"No," said Mr. Lauriston. "No; certainly not."

"Another time, then," said Dick, and vanished smiling.

Rachel had shaken hands with him almost mechanically. Now that Mr. Lauriston had come it seemed natural that he should remain and the other go. She was not disturbed at the prospect of a *tête-à-tête* with the new comer. She had had so many, and, indeed, every talk she had with Mr. Lauriston seemed like a *tête-à-tête*. She was not more alone with him now than she had been from the moment she looked round and saw him coming up the room.

He drew a chair near the one she had taken, and sat down. "I met Laura going out," he said, "and she told me I should find you here. I wanted to find you. I have a trifling matter to tell you, and a question to ask."

"Which is to come first?" she asked.

"Well; the question, with your permission."

She lifted her long lashes, and made a slight gesture of assent. "What is it?" she asked, when he did not immediately speak.

"I don't know why I ask it," he said. "I know what your answer will be. In fact I *have* asked it, and you have answered it, since I came this afternoon. Only if there were the faintest chance that you might answer differently——"

She was looking at him with quickened interest. "What is it?" she said again.

"Some time ago we had a talk on the subject of consolation——"

"Yes; and you told me I should forget."

"Well?" he said.

She turned a little, and faced him more directly. "Do you mean, have I forgotten? Is that your question?"

"Has time helped you as I hoped? That is my question."

She paused before replying. Her eyes, fixed on his face, seemed to him to be reading her answer in his memory as well as in her own. "You said I had already answered you since you came into the room. What did I answer?"

"You answered, No," he said.

"Well, that is my answer. No."

In Mr. Lauriston's presence no other answer was possible. At the sound of his voice all her old dreams and fears awoke and thronged about her. Her eyes strayed from his face to his idly pendent hand, on which was the ring she gave him as they stood together by the sea.

"Forget!" she said, "how can I forget? Is anything changed since we talked about it last? I laugh at my fancies, but I don't forget them. Why, I remember how you listened to me that afternoon in your park at Redlands, almost every word you said. You gathered some lilies for me—lilies always remind me of that day. If I shut my eyes I can see you as you stooped to pick them. And I stood by, feeling as if I were in a dream—as if the grey lady might turn the corner all at once and come to us."

"Do you feel as if she might come now?"

"Now?" Rachel answered with a laugh. "She will probably come to-night."

Lauriston was silent, looking down. There was a line between his finely-drawn brows.

"I remember it all as if it were yesterday," she went on in a musing voice. "It might be yesterday, that day when I was sitting in the sunshine on the cliff, and saw you coming up the slope to tell me your news. I can hear the very tone in which you said, 'And one by one the Rutherfords died;' and then the horror came, and I knew it was real because I saw it in your eyes!"

He looked down, as if he feared what she should read in his eyes at that moment. But, though she was looking at him, it was with a dreamily retrospective glance which saw him only in the past.

"Yesterday!" she said. "It might be to-day. Oh, how it all comes back! You might have finished speaking not a minute ago. How could you ask me whether I forgot? How could I forget, or anything be different?"

"Forgive me," said Lauriston, raising his head. He was quick to note the subtlest changes in Rachel Conway, and it seemed to him that as she said "It might be to-day," the girl of five years earlier, in her linen gown of dusky blue, rose before him. When he looked up, the illusion continued. The blue linen, faded by sun and spray, was changed, but nothing else. There were the same eyes, the same appealing voice, the same brave attempt to smile; and on his part the same helplessness.

"Forgive me," he said; "I did not precisely mean to ask if you forgot, but it comes to much the same thing. Forgive me for reminding you."

"There isn't anything to forgive. I may have to pay for this, but I am glad to speak out," she answered. "Since it is there still, I would rather say so, just for once." Memory had been so sharply awakened by his question that Rachel was honestly unconscious how often it had slept since she had last spoken. She believed that it had been alive and sensitively quivering from first to last; but she tried to make light of it. "Sometimes," she said, "I fancy that I must be a little mad already."

"Why?"

"Because—you won't tell—the sane people don't seem to me to be so very sane. When I am doing what they do, I feel now and then as if we were all mad together. There we are—talking, and reciting, and dancing, and smiling, in hot little drawing-rooms, and knowing all the time that the lights will go out and the darkness come, and that we must go away and die alone. Isn't it queer? Sometimes, when people are buzzing round me, I sit by the wall and wonder whether somebody—anybody—who used to come like the rest and flirt and laugh, may be dying just on the other side of it. I don't say so, you know; I answer what is said to me. And I think of all there is to see in the world, of lonely sunsets and sunrises, and skies, and seas, and hills, while we are all huddled together, and too busy to take any notice."

"That's better," said Lauriston. "Why not go and see them?"

She sighed and smiled. The sigh told of amusement; the smile, of hopelessness. "N-no," she said, "I don't feel energetic enough. Perhaps I'm growing old. Does it strike you so?"

"Hardly," he replied. She leaned back in her chair, and looked at him languidly, smilingly. Of course, she knew well that she was more beautiful than when she met him first, but what did that matter? She always had curious fancies when she talked with him, and it seemed to her at that moment as if she and he had lived their lives elsewhere, and now were dead together. "No," said Mr. Lauriston after a prolonged pause, "I perceive no signs of advancing age."

He was accustomed to see her under this aspect, but he found it hard to realise how differently she had affected him, when he came into the room and found her laughing with Dick.

"No signs?" she repeated. "Then I suppose I was mistaken. Well, all things considered, perhaps it is just as well. I'm not afraid of growing

old ; but if one began it in good earnest between six and seven and twenty, it might be rather long before one had finished."

"I think you'd be tired of it," he assented. "Better see a little more first."

"But I'm not energetic, whatever the reason may be. No ; I'll stay at home with the sane people."

Mr. Lauriston did not reply, and for a little while there was silence. It did not trouble either of them ; they could be silent in each other's presence without embarrassment. But if any third person had come upon them unawares, he might have fancied that he had stepped into the midst of some old fairy legend of enchanted peace, which had for its central figure the beautiful, motionless woman resting in her crimson chair. Even the fire on the hearth, which seemed more alive than anything else in the hushed room, burned redly and without flame. Lauriston's eyes were fixed on it, while Rachel looked dreamily at her loosely-clasped hands. It was some trivial sound from the outer world which broke the silence, and at the same time made them conscious of it. They both looked up and came back to his afternoon call.

"Hadn't you something to tell me ?" she asked.

"Do you mind a bit of family history ?"

"Not at all, since you are going to tell it. Some dreadful people don't know where their own family history ends, and the history of everybody they ever met begins. But you keep yours within very strict limits."

"I'll endeavour to deserve that. Do you know that I have three sisters—two who live at Aldermere, and one who married five or six years ago ?"

"And went to America. Yes ; that was Mary, the youngest."

"Oh, this is very easy," Mr. Lauriston said with a smile. "Probably you also know that we did not much like the marriage. However, she was independent, and of course she went her own way. We warned her that he would turn out badly, and that she was not to blame us. I believe we also added that as she made her bed so she must lie on it ; and it seems my sisters meant it."

"You didn't, then ?"

"As a statement of fact, yes ; but not otherwise. But I am naturally so impressive that Mary thought I meant it more than anybody. Consequently I have only just discovered that, being in difficulties, she has been appealing to my sisters, who didn't see their way to helping her out of them, while I have never had a word from her. They will not do anything for her unless she comes home, which she won't do, or can't do."

"Is he so very bad ?"

Mr. Lauriston shrugged his shoulders. "Mary and all his friends assured me that he was very good, and that his little failings would be of no importance on the other side of the Atlantic. Of course, there are countries where a cargo of beads, or wire, or buttons may be worth more

than gold ; but it didn't strike me that New York was exactly the place to which to send anything which was a failure here. The man was good-tempered, good-looking, and fairly well read, but he was weak, vain, and incurably idle—a self-indulgent fool. If there is a country where those qualities are really valuable, I should like to assist a few emigrants.”

“Then he has failed, of course?”

“He has never done anything else. I don't see what he possibly could do worth doing but die, and he doesn't seem able to manage that. I didn't expect it of him, so I'm not disappointed,” said Mr. Lauriston with generous candour. “He was in a railway accident three or four months ago, which was praiseworthy of him, but he came safely out of it. That's just the way he always spoils things. Luckily I haven't to account for his existence from the orthodox point of view—he would be a puzzle.”

“Your sister—is she fond of him still?” asked Rachel.

Again he shrugged his shoulders. “Who can tell?” he said. “I guess—but, mind, this is only a guess—that she is repenting while she is with him, and would adore him if they were parted. The fellow has an admiration for what is gentlemanly, as he understands it, and would like to be a gentleman if he could. If there happens to be an interval between getting out of one dirty scrape and getting into another, he can talk in a very lofty and pathetic manner, and mean it too. My sentiments are not lofty, but I fancy Mary's are.”

“Perhaps if she knew how you hated him, that was the reason she did not write to you.”

“I don't hate him in any vindictive sense. It is not his fault that he has no backbone, and that, set him up where you will, he is always slipping down into the dirt. But I can't pretend to find him sweet when I am picking him out of the gutter. Well, enough of this—the mere thought of the man is too much—*here!*”

“But how sad for your sister!”

He nodded. “I can't get at the real state of the case from her letters to them at Aldermere. Sending money is very little good ; I might pour my whole income through his pockets and not really help Mary. I see nothing for it but to go myself and look into matters. And so, Miss Conway, this is a farewell visit.”

He had declared that Rachel would not say fifty words to this announcement. At the first moment it seemed as if she would not say one, but would only look at him with wondering eyes.

“I met Laura as I came in,” he continued, “and said good-by to her. This is rather a hurried decision, but the sooner I go the sooner I shall come back, and, honestly, I shall be glad to get the business over. Very likely I shall only find that I was a fool to meddle with it, but it is as well to make sure.”

“You are going to America!” said Rachel at last. The tidings came

like a sudden blow, just when their talk had awakened all her old memories. She looked at him ; but she saw the sea, leagues upon leagues of heaving water, wide, and wild, and grey, and the sound of its innumerable surges was in her ears. She had a miserable feeling of desolation and unreality. Her trouble seemed unreal, but then all help and comfort seemed unreal too. It was like a dream of dreariness and loneliness from which there was no waking. Go ? Of course he would go, but till that moment she had not thought of such a possibility. "To America !" she repeated.

"Don't you think it will be best ?"

"Yes, I suppose so." She made a great effort to disperse her fancies and look at the commonplace aspect of the journey ; but the impression of distance remained. "It seems a long way," she said.

"Oh, but that's nothing now-a-days. What *is* anything now-a-days ? In the time of Columbus, now——"

"Oh, Columbus !" said Rachel, trying to speak lightly. "Wouldn't anything short of Columbus content you ?"

He finished the sentence in his quiet voice. "In the time of Columbus I should have stayed at home. As it is, you will only have time for a few balls and flower-shows and musical evenings before I shall be here again. Have you any commands for New York, Miss Conway ?"

She shook her head a little absently, and sat turning the black ring on her finger. "Of course the journey is nothing," she said after a moment. "People go every day, I know that. Only when we have never talked of my folly for years, and now have talked of it to-day, and when you are going away suddenly to-day, as you never went before, it seems like a change somehow. It is a trifle, as you say, but I feel as if it were the beginning of the end."

"Of what end ?"

"I don't know." Rachel answered briefly, but the air seemed laden with unspoken words. "Perhaps when you get there you will like it and stay some time."

"I shall come home as soon as I can."

"Perhaps when you do come home it will be different."

"How can it be different ?"

"Perhaps you will be different."

"Perhaps you will be," he retorted.

"No," she said gravely, and "No," he repeated. The word fell with two softly distinct strokes on the silence.

"If there were anything I could do before I went ?" he began.

"No. That is—Mr. Lauriston, did you write to Aldermere ? About the boy ?"

"I wrote to my sisters, and they will write to you. He can come when you please."

"I should like him while you are away. I should like to keep him till you come back if you will trust me with him."

"By all means. And that is all I can do for you!" he said with a curious smile, half wistful, half whimsical. It is not precisely what I had imagined. Still, if you like it!" He shrugged his shoulders. "Till I come back, then. Why are you looking at the clock? Is anybody coming?"

"Miss Anderson. She said she would be here for some tea punctually at five."

"Well, it's only a quarter past; she won't be here just yet."

He stooped and picked up a thread of the crimson silk which Rachel was using for her embroidery. As he rose, their eyes met.

"I am of no use to you," he said. "I never shall be. You will never need the help that I could give. I say it from the bottom of my heart. You were strong enough to bear the blow I struck that day when I came smiling to you with my news; you will not fail in any trial. If you were glad to have some one then who might partly understand your trouble, I am glad that I was there."

"I was," said Rachel.

He bent his head, "But now," he said, "all that is over. You say you have not forgotten. No, and you cannot forget while I am here. You never would forget altogether, of course, but the old dread would fall asleep. I see it would, if my presence did not wake it up. I fancied once I might help you to conquer your trouble, and, instead of that, I'm part of it."

"Don't say that," she replied in a constrained tone.

"Why not say it?"

"Well, if you are part of it, you have helped me to bear the rest."

"Perhaps," he said, speaking more lightly. "At any rate I thank you for putting the matter in its prettiest aspect. Well, I'm off now to the New World. But we won't have any formal farewells; I shall so soon come back to the old one."

Rachel smiled faintly. "I think if I found my way to a new world I would never come back."

"I'm not sure," said Lauriston. "The charm of another world consists in its being the place where one isn't. For my own part I would rather come back to the old. I have no heart for new ventures."

"Then come back!"

"So I will. Yes, I am coming back, though it would be far better if I stayed away for ever."

"No, you must not say that! Indeed it would not."

"Well, it is something that you should think so. No, it isn't," he said abruptly, "for I know—I know. Did I want so unreasonably much, I wonder? If I could have helped you, really helped you, in your trouble; if I could have felt that you needed me, that your life was better and fuller because of mine, I would have been content—I would indeed—I would have asked for nothing more."

He maintained his voice at a certain level till he came to the last

words ; but when he said, "I would have asked for nothing more," it sank, as if failing in the effort to convey something beyond speech. Yet it was precisely those words which fell on Rachel's ear with startling distinctness.

"You would have asked for nothing more!" she repeated.

Apparently he took the repetition as a doubt. "It is true," he said. "I would have been content if I could have helped you. Perhaps I would not have asked as much as that. If you could but have forgotten it for one day with me—but you couldn't! Not that I should have been any good to you, but that for one day you should not have been the worse for me. Well, even that wasn't to be." He sprang up and drew the little ring from his finger.

"Don't!" she cried. "You have given me up!"

"Not I. I have given myself up—that's quite another thing. I'm a perfect friend, simply perfect, in imaginary circumstances which don't happen ; but in real life I'm a failure. Keep my ring, I entreat you, if you will. I am bound as much as ever ; but take back yours."

She had risen too, and stood with one hand out, motioning back the ring. "No," she said, "I cannot! I will not! No, keep it!"

He hesitated, still holding it, and glanced at her with brilliant eyes.

"So be it—till I come home," he said.

With a sudden change of gesture she caught the ring from him before he had time to replace it, and herself thrust it back on his finger. Then she dropped his hand and moved quickly towards the fireplace. There was a choking sensation at her throat, and her eyes were full of tears that would have fallen at a word. She did not speak, but she signed to him to leave her.

He lingered, but she did not stir. She stood there mute, averted, with her head thrown slightly back, and the hand which had given the signal of dismissal hanging loosely by her side. "You are right," he said when he had waited doubtfully for a moment. "I had better go. *Au revoir.*"

He walked the whole length of the room to the door. With his hand on the fastening he looked back, and encountered her eyes. She had turned her head, and was watching him eagerly and yet questioningly, as if she would and would not recall him. He took a couple of quick steps towards her, and at the same moment a thundering knock resounded through the house. Lauriston stopped with a short laugh, nodded a farewell, and was gone. It seemed as if Destiny, weary of their hesitations, had driven up in a brougham to settle the matter.

A couple of minutes later Destiny appeared in the drawing-room, in the likeness of Miss Anderson, clothed in sad sage green. She was dying for a cup of tea, and so breathlessly anxious to inquire how dearest Rachel was that she had not a moment's leisure to judge for herself ; and Rachel, asserting that she was quite well, was assured that she looked so, consulted as to the shape of Miss Anderson's sleeve, and once more

admired, all in one unpunctuated sentence. Then, as the fluent lady undid a parcel containing her latest achievement in embroidery, she casually remarked that she had met Mr. Lauriston on the stairs. "What a queer little man he is! You know him very well, don't you? Is it really true that he has never been the same since his wife died?" Miss Conway had not known him while his wife was alive, and would not say whether she thought it was true or not. "Oh, I *hope* it is!" Miss Anderson exclaimed; "it's so pathetic. Doesn't he sing divinely? I heard him at Mrs. Ladbroke's a night or two ago—it was really too lovely! Don't *you* adore his singing? And now, dear, I must have your opinion about this. *Do* you think the yellow is deep enough? Now do tell me frankly—I adore honesty, and I would sooner pick it all out than have it wrong. I wasn't sure, myself, it mightn't be a trifle pale when I was putting it in. Almost primrosy, isn't it? Now, do tell me!"

CHAPTER XV.

A MIDNIGHT PICTURE.

MRS. LATHAM had never tried to discover the precise nature of the bond between her cousin and Rachel. She had joked about the ring which Rachel wore, and knew that it indicated a covenant of some kind, but her curiosity was not aroused. "Some whim of Adam's," she said to herself. Adam's whims were known to be at once sudden and lasting, and since his wife's death he had always seemed to hold his life carelessly, as if it were to be dissipated in whims. But then his whims were more permanent than other people's serious resolutions. Mrs. Latham would have believed any one who should have told her that Adam had given away his favourite ring at a first interview, but she knew that any promise which went with it would be kept to his latest breath.

Perhaps for this very reason she found nothing exciting in his relationship with Rachel, and had taken no heed of its unbroken course. But his hurried departure had startled her, and, brief as the interruption was to be, she wondered how it would affect her friend. When she came from her drive she looked curiously for signs of anxiety or indifference. She felt that she must see one, and she saw neither. It is true that it was difficult to judge of such a matter while Miss Anderson was conversing so fluently. Rachel listened patiently to her visitor, and sometimes fixed her eyes upon her with such intensity of attention that she seemed to look quite through the chattering little woman, and out at some prospect on the other side. In course of time, however, Miss Anderson left, and the two friends were standing by the fire. "Were you not astonished at Adam's news?" said Laura.

Rachel nodded. "I was very much astonished. But I ought not to have been. It is very good of him—it is like him."

"It is like him to do what nobody expects," Laura replied. "He used not to be a very affectionate brother, but certainly with such sisters he must have been *very* affectionate to show any signs of it. And Mary was the best of them—very much the best."

Rachel thoughtfully fingered the lace ruffle at her wrist. "He is always doing kindnesses," she said, not passionately nor reproachfully. It was rather as if she spoke out of the depth of her own heart, and would have spoken just the same if the remark had not been in the slightest degree relevant. "He is kind to Mr. Brett," she said after a pause.

"Kind! Yes, he is very kind to Dick. I know he is. I wonder he doesn't freeze the poor boy with his kindness. Do you think he cares for Dick?"

"I don't know. I suppose so."

"And I suppose he doesn't. But, mind, it won't make any difference. He will do what he has determined to do, just as he will go to America because he has determined to go. Do you think anything would have kept him from going?"

"Perhaps not," said Rachel, glancing towards the door with a vivid remembrance of Mr. Lauriston's shining eyes, and of his quick steps towards her. "No one could wish to keep him from going to help his sister."

"No, of course not. Poor Mary!"

"Perhaps," said Rachel, "Mr. Lauriston cares more than we think. I'm not sure that it is easy to understand him."

"There I don't agree with you," Mrs. Latham replied. "There is no difficulty in understanding Adam if you remember his past. Never forget that he gave his heart away as completely and superbly as he does everything else, that he was madly in love, that she was most beautiful, and that within the year he lost her for ever. You know his creed or his want of a creed. Well, remembering that, you will understand that, since she died, the world has been just an empty place for him, where he follows his fancies to pass the time. If you understand that, you will understand him. He plays the good brother, for instance, as he plays the good landlord down at Redlands—Adam is a very good landlord—or the good patron to Dick, or the good cousin to me. Luckily he likes the good parts, even if he sneers at them now and then. But he leaves his boy alone, do you see? *That* touches on the one love of his life."

Rachel slowly turned her clear, beautiful eyes to Mrs. Latham's face and suffered them to rest there. Was she never to feel sure of Mr. Lauriston? This theory of Laura's was so terribly simple and complete that it silenced her. Yet was there nothing beyond it?

"The boy is coming to me while he is away," she said.

"Ah! that's a capital plan, if you are bent on having the little fellow. I thought, before, it would be awkward for Adam; he would have had to find an excuse for not coming here."

"Why did you not say so?"

"My dear," said Mrs. Latham frankly, "I might have landed myself in a difficulty in trying to help Adam out of one. He doesn't require a guardian angel, he is very capable. And I'm not certain of my fitness for the part."

Rachel smiled. She was reflecting meanwhile on the faint, indefinable something in Mr. Lauriston's manner, which had made her say more than once, when they had talked of the boy's coming, "You do not like it." Laura's theory fitted that admirably, as it fitted everything else, except, perhaps, the thrill which had responded to his assertion, "I would have asked for nothing more!" The assertion itself did not necessarily contradict the theory. If it had been repeated to Laura, she would have fitted it to her idea of Adam. But from Laura's point of view the thrill was singularly out of place, and it was a relief to Rachel to discover that it was time to dress for dinner.

They had guests that evening, and there was music as usual. She was glad of the music. She sat in the chair by the fireside, where she sat that afternoon, and held a screen to shield her from the scorching blaze. Every one was silent, except the musicians, who built up a wonderful airy edifice in which Rachel's thoughts found shelter. As she sat there listening, and glancing from time to time at the far-off door, the music seemed to be interwoven with memories of Mr. Lauriston's voice; it bade her farewell, it assured her of his return, it died away in the sad reproach of his resignation. Even if Laura's theory were correct, he had at least turned to her for something of consolation in his loneliness. He had said that he would not change, that he would come back as he went, but he could not be the same to her. She had always pictured him standing apart, watching her, analysing her, guarding her, but never needing her. She might be good to his boy, she might even help and counsel Dick; but she could do nothing for Mr. Lauriston. And now it seemed that through those silent years he had been waiting for a word or look which she had never given. The thought touched her strangely.

And yet what could she have given him? What could she have done? She had not altogether regretted Miss Anderson's arrival that afternoon, for it had allowed her a little breathing space. What would he have said if he had come back to her up the long room with those questioning eyes? And what could she have answered out of the hurried confusion of her thoughts? She knew that she longed to give Mr. Lauriston something; a sudden rush of gratitude, regret, and delicate tenderness welled up from the very bottom of her heart, but, until it should have subsided into stillness, she did not know what she had to give. Something of doubt still remained. It was not that she felt, as she had sometimes felt before, as if he had no life apart from her haunting terror, as one might feel who should confide a fear of ghosts to a stranger, and discover afterwards that the confidant had come out of the world of shadows to listen. Whatever else she might have been assured of that afternoon, she was at least assured that Mr.

Lauriston was flesh and blood. But what did he want? If he loved her, he loved the self she loathed; he was attracted by the tensely strung tremulous soul on the confines of the night. Had she been altogether healthy and happy, he would not have been drawn to her so powerfully. That was the attraction which had led her to utter her secret to him, but it was also the cause of the repulsion which had troubled her gratitude.

It was certainly best that Miss Anderson had come to give her time to think. But, though she was not conscious of having thought to any purpose, she was already wishing for his presence as a touchstone by which she might test Laura's theory. "Perhaps she is right," Rachel said to herself, slowly moving her little screen. "And if I have been selfish and careless, at least he is happier than I. He has had his perfect love, his year of life, while I have had nothing. If I had had that—if I had had one week—one day, I think I could be content though all the rest were barren. It doesn't matter so much if I have wronged him—at least it only matters to me. He has had more than I could give him." But still her thoughts went impatiently and yet shrinkingly forward to his coming home. Those hurried steps towards her at the moment of his departure enabled her to picture his return—it would be like that. And then——?

Mrs. Latham could not understand the look of perplexed expectancy in Rachel's eyes.

The next day was a busy one. Miss Conway spent the morning in choosing and arranging a room for little Will. She drove out in the afternoon, and came in with a carriageload of toys and picture books. Laura uttered exclamations of surprise as the parcels were carried in, but Rachel was serene and smiling. "There wasn't room for the rocking-horse," she said, "but they'll send it to-morrow. They promised it should not be forgotten."

"Well, then, I should think it will be in time, as we don't yet know when the boy comes. Am I to keep it exercised meanwhile?" Laura inquired with fine sarcasm.

But Rachel only laughed and went upstairs, looking into Will's room on her way. "I must get some flowers for the window," she said to her maid. "I'm afraid a little fellow from the country will think our London houses dull and dingy." Again that evening, when she came home from the opera, she lingered for another glance. She stood in the doorway gazing at the little empty nest. Her eyes were shining, her jewels flashed, she was like a picture in a dusky frame. She had stopped on her way to think of Will; but presently, as she leaned there looking into the shadows, she perceived that she was thinking of Lauriston. Where was he that night? For the first time since their covenant of friendship she knew absolutely nothing of his movements. She had not heard whether he had already started, or, if not, when he intended to go. She could call up his figure before her; indeed, it rose

unbidden ; but she could not fill in the background with any possible circumstances of travel ; she did not know when or how the boat went ; she tried to fancy it, and failed. By some freak of imagination she could only picture him at home, sitting motionless and silent in one of his great ghostly rooms at Redlands, with the candle-light shining on his face. So distinct and vivid did the fancy grow, as if she were actually looking into that room, instead of into the one which she had made ready for little Will, that she paused to laugh at her folly, and to remind herself that although he might possibly have gone down to the manor-house before starting for New York, it was not particularly likely that he would. This effort destroyed the vision, and left her with the impression that, while she had pictured him at Redlands, he was in reality gone ; that he was, as he had lightly said, on his way to the New World, and altogether beyond her reach. She shivered at the blankness of the thought, as if a cold breath had passed by her where she stood. "I shall have a night full of dreams if I don't take care," she said to herself ; and went quickly along the passage to her room with a backward glance over her shoulder.

Whatever her dreams might have been, the morning found her restless and troubled. The impression of the night before had deepened to a conviction that Lauriston was gone. She would not ask Laura whether she knew anything of her cousin's plans ; a feeling of pride restrained her, as well as a certainty of the uselessness of any questioning. He was gone, let Laura say what she liked, and with his departure had come a sense of loneliness and dread. "How could he say I didn't need him, how could he think it?" she asked herself. "Why didn't I tell him how much I wanted him? But I didn't know."

Even the arrival of the rocking-horse gave her only a momentary pleasure. When she had seen it placed in the most convenient spot she lingered for a minute, laying her hand lightly on its shining coat of dapple-grey paint, and thinking fondly of the little rider who would come and go in rhythmical motion on the smart new saddle. But underneath all thought of the boy, lay the dead blankness of her thought of Lauriston. She even tried deliberately to call up the picture of the night before, but she could summon nothing but pale reminiscences. It was as if the lights which had so vividly illuminated his face had been suddenly blown out, and had left her gazing into the blackness. She would have laughed at her own uneasiness if she had not been a little frightened by it. "I wish I had asked him when he would come back," she thought, drawing her fingers through the mane of the gallant grey as caressingly as if she were standing for a study of the young Herminia.

The Philosophy of a Visiting Card.

It is only a plain scrap of ordinary pasteboard, inscribed in a neat small copperplate hand with its owner's name—Mr. Edgar B. Chadwick—but it is the one solitary piece of literature I have about me, and there are five inexorable hours to be got through somehow on the way down to Devonshire. Clearly, since I am not Mr. Gladstone, there is but one course open before me. I must subsist upon the card alone as mental food for the next five hours. And that is really far easier to do than you would at first suppose, for I have a pencil in my pocket, and I have made up my mind that I will convert the rectangular scrap of pasteboard into the nucleus of a philological article. This is how the thing is managed. I pull the elements of Mr. Chadwick's name to pieces; I jot down the analogies and illustrations that strike me on the back of the card; and when I get to-night to my lodgings on Dartmoor, I shall take pen in hand and write the notes out in full while the subject is fresh in my memory. To be sure, there is not much space on the little bit of pasteboard, but my writing is very small, and a single word is quite enough by way of a memorandum. Think it all out between stations; scribble down the key-words whenever we stop at Swindon or Chippenham; and there you are—the article is practically written.

It is always well to begin at the wrong end, because that ensures freshness in the point of view: and so I shall begin my dissertation on the card, not with its first word, Edgar, but with its last word, Chadwick. Besides, that name, as Aristotle would remark, is really the first in itself, or by nature, though not the first to us, or by convention; for its bearer was obviously born a Chadwick, whereas he was only made an Edgar and a B. by his godfathers and godmothers at his baptism. Now, the Chadwicks are one of the families who derive their surname from the town or village in which they once lived; and that fact will serve to show at the outset what is the sort of valuable result which we can sometimes get out of the study of nomenclature, personal or local. It might seem at first sight as though the pursuit of name-lore was purely otiose and meaningless—a part of the same feudal and nonsensical lumber as heraldry, or the pedigrees of the peerage. But, in reality, every name is a true philological fossil; and just as ordinary fossils tell us something about the early unwritten history of the earth, so these philological fossils tell us something about what (being an Irishman by blood) I may fairly call the prehistoric history of men and places. I have tried once before to show in this magazine how many unsuspected relics of the old English clan-system we still find about us in such personal or local

names as Manning and Harding, Birmingham and Wellington, Illingworth and Piddinghoe; and now I wish to point out another way in which we may work back from names to the past history of persons or places which do or do not bear them.

The last clause, I assure you, in spite of appearances, is *not* a bull. For, to the best of my knowledge, no village or town in England is now known as Chadwick. But the very form of the surname shows at once that it must be derived from a village so called; and, therefore, that such a village must at some time or other have existed somewhere. Not infrequently a close examination of surnames enables us thus to fill up the gaps in our knowledge left by the study of local nomenclature. For example, that indefatigable archæologist, Mr. Kemble, drew up a very useful list of all the known early English clan-settlements, of the same type as Nottingham, Bensington, Wallingford, or Kensington; and by comparing the numbers of such clan-villages in each county with one another, we are able roughly and approximately to guess at the probable relative strength of the primitive Teutonic colonisation in various parts of Britain. But Mr. Kemble's list, though almost exhaustive in its own way, was prepared solely from the Ordnance Survey maps, and does not take into account at all the subsidiary source of information afforded us by modern surnames. These are in many cases derived from towns or villages, either now extinct, or else (as often happens) known only at present by some later alternative title. By collecting together all such local surnames as happen to have fallen in my way, I have been able largely to extend the catalogue of primitive English clan-settlements; and even in some cases approximately to decide in what county the lost settlement was originally fixed. Thus, there is now no village of Cannington in Dorset; but the comparative frequency of the surname Cannington in the western half of the shire shows that such a village must once have existed somewhere near Bridport or Weymouth, and thus enlarges the list of Dorsetshire clans by one more conjectural item. In like manner, the old mark or boundary between Kent and Sussex was originally known as the Dens; and each village within its limits bore a name of which the word "den" (a clearing or glade in the forest) forms a component part. The Court of Dens, which survived till the seventeenth century, had jurisdiction over thirty-two such swine pastures, but several of them are not now even locally known by name. Mr. Kemble could only identify twenty-five out of the number, of which Tenterden, Cowden, Castleden, and Hazleden are the best known. But by noting down all surnames of the sort which occurred at Hastings, Eastbourne, and Folkestone (whither the population of the Weald has now chiefly betaken itself), I have been able to recover the names not only of the thirty-two original Dens subject to the Court, but of some forty others of less importance in the same neighbourhood. For example, the great authority on the Court of Dens is Sir Roger Twisden, whose own name enshrines for us one of the lost pastures; while John Selden, also a Sussex man,

keeps green the memory of another. So I have gathered from shop fronts a long list of Plevindens, Coldens, and Wolfindens, which amply supplements the catalogue of still recognisable place-names. Some of them, like Eversden, point back in a very graphic fashion to the primitive condition of the Kentish Weald; for *eofer* is good old-English for a wild boar (the same word, in fact, as *eber* and *aper*); so that Eversden really means the wild boar's pasture.

The village of Chadwick appears to me to stand in somewhat the same case: at least, I have never succeeded in discovering its local habitation, though I have long known and speculated on its name. However, it is a dangerous thing positively to assert a negative; and if some of my readers, wiser than myself in this matter, happen to have come across some obscure hamlet of Chadwick, in some unknown rural recesses of Warwickshire or Staffordshire, I trust they will not be too much puffed up with vanity at their superior knowledge, but will humbly reflect that some other man, too, may know of sundry other villages in Devonshire, say, or Northumberland, whose very names have never fallen on their learned ears. The pride of intellect against which preachers warn us should at least be based on better ground than accidental acquaintance with a solitary fact.

The latter half of Chadwick—I begin again as before at the wrong end—clearly encloses the root *wick*, a town or village. Perhaps the most primitive meaning of the old Aryan word which assumes that form in modern English was rather dwelling or enclosure—a single building, not a group of buildings, which is the sense it still retains in the Greek *oikos*. In Latin *vicus*, however, we get it in much the same signification as in English—a collection of houses ranged together along a road; that is to say, a street or hamlet.* The Teutonic settlers brought the word to England, and gave it to many of their earliest colonies. Thus, the clan of Waring, who now call themselves Waring, had their home at Waringawic, afterwards softened down through Waringwic into Warwick. These were obviously of the same tribe as the first inhabitants of Warrington, or, for the matter of that, as the Varangians of Byzantine history, the tale of whose strange adventures I hope at some future time briefly to summarise for those who will hear it. Other well-known wicks are Alnwick, Smethwick, Chiswick, and Berwick. Sometimes, though more rarely, *wick* forms the first element in the name instead of the second, as at Wickham and Wickham-Street. Habitually, however, it appears rather as a formative suffix.

The true old-English form of the word is always *wic*, but this is differently modernised in different parts of the country, according to the peculiar dialectic fashions of various districts or races. Already, in deal-

* Let me gently protest, in passing, against the common statement that the early digammated form of the Greek word was *FOIKOΣ*. Clearly, it must have been *FIKOΣ*. The *O* of the Greek replaces the lost digamma, and stands to the word as the *V* of *vicus* and the *W* of *wick*. So, too, in the case of *wine*, &c.

ing with Casters and Chesters I have shown that the hard forms belong rather to the north and east, while the softer sounds are found mostly in the south and west. It is much the same with the wicks and wiches. In Scotland, especially Scandinavian Scotland, we usually find such forms as Wick, Lerwick, Hawick, and Berwick; but in southern England, we get rather the soft type in Norwich, Ipswich, Woolwich, and Sandwich. The two modes are related as kirk to church, or as birk to birch. In the extreme west of England, however, a hard form once more occurs under the guise of week: for example, the village of Week answers to Wick in Caithness; while German's Week, the hamlet of St. Germanus, corresponds to our unknown Chadwick, the hamlet of St. Chad. But there I have let the cat out of the bag before due time. Let us bundle him in again incontinently, and make believe we know nothing about him.

Mr. Isaac Taylor, in his admirable volume on *Words and Places* (to which this article owes innumerable acknowledgments) has pointed out another curious cross-relation between these town-names in Wick. The first, or English stratum, consists for the most part of inland towns, such as Warwick and Alnwick; for the earliest Teutonic colonists settled down at once into thorough-going landmen, and gave up their seafaring ways so entirely that in Alfred's days they had to begin all over again with a brand-new navy, manned by Frisians, to resist the piratical Danes. To these English farmers, accordingly, a *wic* meant a village or settled home in the country. But to the Scandinavian pirate, with whom the corsair stage was permanent, a *wic* or *vik* meant a bay where he could easily beach his sea-snakes; a cove of sloping sand with a little village nestling at its side as the headquarters of his predatory forays. Thus the shores exposed to Scandinavian incursions are full of *viks*, or long fiords or estuaries, from Reykjavik in Iceland to Westervik in Sweden, and from Lerwick in Shetland to Sandwich on the Kentish coast. In Britain, our Scandinavian wicks have mostly become wiches; but they can easily be recognised by their position: Norwich on the old estuary of the Yare; Ipswich on the shallow tidal mouth of the Orwell; Greenwich and Woolwich on the highest navigable reaches of the Thames; Sandwich by the now silted channel of the Wensum; and Harwich among the long branching creeks that surround the low isolated spit of the Naze. Every one of these was just such a fiord as the Northmen loved; and around them all Scandinavian names, both local and personal, still cluster by the dozen.

Nor is that all. The wiches underwent a still further etymological metamorphosis, which at last completely cut them off in meaning from the primitive wicks. These Scandinavian wiches or bays by the seaside were just the sort of places where bay-salt was manufactured, as it is to this day in the *salines* of the south of France. Before the Norman conquest, such salt-pans were common along the coast; and they came naturally enough to be spoken of as wiches or wyches. Hence, when

the salt-wells and salt-mines of the interior began to be discovered, the name of wych was applied to these as well. This is the origin of our inland wiches, such as Droitwich, Nantwich, Middlewich, and Northwich, all of which possess salt-mines.

And now, to return to our sheep : under which of these heads must we class the lost village of Chadwick ? Clearly under the first. It is a true old-English wick, if not of the very earliest colony days, at least of the age immediately succeeding the introduction of Christianity among the heathen English. It took its name, doubtless, from a little wooden church dedicated to St. Chad of Lichfield. And who was St. Chad ? Well, the invaluable old historian Bæda tells us all about him. He was the apostle of pagan Mercia, the Christian teacher who went out from Northumbria to convert the wild half-Celtic realm of the heathen champion Penda. His real name was Ceadda, and he was a member of that Celtic Christian church which had been planted in Northumbria, during the days of St. Oswald, by the missionary monks of Iona. But after the reconciliation of the North to Rome, Ceadda was sent by Archbishop Theodore of Canterbury to be the first bishop of the true western Mercians ; and the missionary prelate fixed the seat of his savage diocese at the royal Mercian burg of Lichfield—a wooden village planted in the midst of the great forest which then stretched down from the Peak in Derbyshire. There he built or restored a church of St. Mary, near the site of the existing cathedral. On later Mercian lips, the name of Ceadda softened into Chad, just as Ceaster softened into Chester. To St. Chad the modern minster at Lichfield is still dedicated. Beyond the Pool, a pretty walk leads to the beautiful rural village of Stowe, long known as Chadstowe, where Ceadda founded a house for his assistant monks. For many centuries, St. Chad remained the great patron saint of western Mercia ; and even now his name and fame are familiar to all who have ever spent a summer holiday within sight of the soaring towers of Lichfield Cathedral.

I implied just now that we would probably have to look to Warwickshire or Staffordshire for our lost village of Chadwick, for these counties form the real nucleus of Mercia, and the region where the sanctity of Chad was most revered during the middle ages. From the familiar guise assumed by the name, without the customary prefix of St., we may feel sure that the village was a very ancient one ; for in later days men would have been more respectful, and would have given the canonised bishop the full benefit of his official title. In earlier times, however, our ancestors, though more devout, were less civil to their saints ; and many cases exactly analogous to Chadstowe and Chadwick occur in many parts of England. Thus, St. Felix of Burgundy, the first bishop of East Anglia, is commemorated in the little Suffolk watering-place of Felixstowe. So, again, St. Petroc of Cornwall has left his name to that Petrocstowe, which we irreverent English have cut down into the meaningless shape of Padstow. Elstow,

near Bedford, famous from its connection with John Bunyan, was once Helenstow in honour of St. Helen. St. Cuthbert (it should be Cuthberht), the apostle of the Scotch Lowlands, is similarly commemorated at Kirkeudbright, a form which may be compared with the like instance of Kirkpatrick. Marystow and Bridestowe in Devon are dedicated to St. Mary and St. Bride; while, not far off, Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy take their names from their respective saints, joined with the river which also affords a cognomen to Tavistock. But a little later on we get the more respectful forms in "Saint" at full. Thus, Padstow, or Petrocstowe, may be compared with St. Petrox, near Dartmouth (a very Celtic dedication, by the way, to turn up in an English county); while Edmundsbury changes readily into Bury St. Edmunds, and German's Week is closely paralleled by St. Germans, near Plymouth.

It may be worth while, too, to note in passing that the habit of naming towns after saints, which, as everybody knows, is extremely common on the continent, has never largely taken root in Teutonic England. Almost our only well-known saints'-towns in all Britain are the two St. Ives, St. Andrews, St. Leonards, St. Albans, and Bury St. Edmunds. None of these are quite genuine except St. Albans and the Huntingdon St. Ives. The others are either Cornish or semi-Highland Scotch; while St. Leonards is a modern artificial creation, as unreal as Cliftonville, Tyburnia, or any other modern abomination of the builder's fancy. It is quite otherwise, however, as we approach the western Celtic frontier. The Celt is a great worshipper of saints, and indeed a great ancestor-worshipper generally; and so the moment we get into Devonshire (as I shall do before I have finished these notes) we come across a whole crop of saints'-towns, utterly unparalleled in the more Teutonic east. Sometimes they occur in composition, as in Ottery St. Mary, Newton St. Cyres, and Shillingford St. George; sometimes they stand quite alone, as in St. Budeaux, St. Mary Church, and St. Leonards. Following up the little river Clist, one finds all the villages along its banks called by the name of the stream, with some distinctive addition, as Clist Hydon, St. Lawrence Clist, Broad Clist, Honiton Clist, Bishops' Clist, St. Mary Clist, and St. George Clist. When one passes on into Cornwall, the saints'-towns become even more numerous. Among the best known are St. Ives, St. Austell, St. Erth, St. Columb, St. Blazey, and St. Germans; while in the country districts almost every second village is a St. Erney, a St. Mellion, a St. Dominick, or a St. Stephens. Most of these local saints are very indigenous indeed, being real or reputed ascetics, who founded little cells or oratories in the hamlets now called after their names. So, too, in Wales, most of the numerous Llan's are dedicated to old Welsh hermits, Llangollen being the church of St. Collen; Llandudno of St. Tudno; Llanberis, of St. Peris, and so forth. A few bear the names of more catholic saints, as Llanfair, the church of St. Mary, and Llanbedr, the church of St. Peter, which one may compare with the above-mentioned instances of

Mary Tavy, Peter Tavy, and St. Mary Church. Even in Wales, a few have been more or less anglicised, notably St. Davids and St. Asaph. I have very little doubt myself that the Virginstowes, Jacobstowes, Honeychurches, St. Petrocs and St. Mary's, which abound in Devonshire, are similar early translations of Cornish-Welsh Llanfairs and Llanpetrocs.

In the more Teutonic districts of England, however, saints'-towns are comparatively few and far between; and when they do occur at all, it is mostly in the older and simpler form, without the honorific prefix of "Saint." Such, for instance, are Peterborough (which has two other historical names); Boston, originally Botulfs-tun; and Saxmund-ham in Suffolk. So, again, Ebbchester preserves the memory of that Ebba who, as St. Abb, has given her name to St. Abb's Head; Bega, known as St. Bee, turns up not only at St. Bees, but also at Beaminster; and the great St. Aldhelm, who has been unjustly ousted by St. Alban from his jutting promontory in Dorset, may still be dimly traced in the very corrupted name of Malmesbury. To this earliest crop of saintly villages, then, both Chadstow and Chadwick clearly belong.

We have thus accounted satisfactorily for the name of Chadwick, viewed as belonging to a village; what are we to say of it next as belonging to a family? Well, in and about the thirteenth century, when surnames were just coming into use, the extended communications between places made it difficult to distinguish one of the Henrys, Johns, Guys, Walters, or Pierses in each village from another. Accordingly, the custom of attaching a nickname to each person became universal. One set of such nicknames was derived from the place to which the person belonged; and this probably forms by far the largest class of English surnames to the present day. The intermediate forms, like William of Malmesbury, Henry of Huntingdon, and Geoffrey of Monmouth, where the local *differentia* has hardly yet become a true surname, are of course familiar to all of us. It is noticeable, however, that the places which have supplied names to families are not generally the larger towns, but rather the smallest villages. London, for example, is a very rare surname; Bristol and York, the two other largest mediæval cities, are but sparingly represented; and even Lincoln, though rendered famous in the person of the martyred president, is far from common. On the other hand, there is hardly a petty hamlet in England which has not given rise to a surname, and some of these surnames are now borne by large numbers of men. The reasons are obvious. On the one hand, people seldom migrate from the town into the country; and in the middle ages they seldom migrated from one town to another, owing to the rigid rules affecting the rights of burgesses and the customs of the trade-guilds; while, even if they did so move, they were not so likely to be distinguished by the name of the place whence they came as by their trade or profession; for townsmen who migrate are, or were, usually master-workmen, not journeymen labourers.

On the other hand, there is, and has always been, a constant flow of young and inexperienced hands from the country into the towns; and such immigrants were pretty sure to be distinguished by the names of the villages from which they came: Dick of Whittington being thus known from Dick of Washington, and Giles of Bradford being thus discriminated from Giles of Colyford. Hence the truth of the saw preserved for us by Verstegan, whose delightful *Restitution of Decayed Intelligence* every Englishman ought to know by heart:—

In Ford, in Ley, in Ham, in Ton,
The most of English surnames run.

A few examples may serve to illustrate the rule; and, lest I should be suspected of inventing my surnames to suit the necessities of the situation—unkind people are always imagining literary crimes of that sort—I will choose them all from historical names of well-known and undoubted personages. Beginning with the Fords, we have in the simple form Ford the dramatist; and in compounds we have Miss Mitford of *Our Village*; the historic family of Clifford (one branch at least takes its name from a little village on the Teign); Beckford of *Vathek* and Fonthill Abbey (the name means the ford on the beck or brook); Telford, the famous engineer; with such lesser celebrities as sundry Dunsfords, Durnfords, Alfords, Rutherfords, Pulsfords, and Walfords, whose exploits the curious in such matters may, if they like, hunt up for themselves. And can we forget such a famous super-historical couple as Sandford and Merton—a double-barrelled instance? Among the Leighs and Leys (the terminations, though etymologically distinct, are now hopelessly mixed up with one another) we have Sir Edward Leigh of the *Critica Sacra*; Copley the painter; Elizabeth Chudleigh the notorious Duchess of Kingston (her family lived near Chudleigh in Devon); Lindley the botanist, Dudley of “Dudley and Empson,” the ancestor of all the Leicester and Northumberland Dudleys, Sir Walter Raleigh, Dodsley of the *Annual Register*, Paley of the *Evidences*, Cowley the poet, Bentley the critic, Shirley the last of the dramatists, John Wesley the father of all Methodists, Bishop Berkeley and David Hartley, a brace of philosophers, Bodley of the Bodleian; and a whole host of similar instances—Bradleys, Harleys, Whalleys, Halleys, Wycherleys, Wellesleys, and Shelleys, whose good and bad deeds I need hardly specify. In the matter of Hams, we have Ascham of the *Scolemaster*, Sir John Denham of *Cooper's Hill*, Jeremy Bentham, William Windham, Barham of the *Ingoldsby Legends*, Sir John Hotham, and Jervase Markham, together with a fertile crop of Jerninghams, Derhams, Broughams, Binghamms, Needhams, Lathamms, Warhams, and Bellinghams. William of Wykeham illustrates this type of name in the making. As to the Tons, their name is absolutely legion. To begin with, there is one John Milton, whose ancestors may have come from any of the many Miltons—sometimes Mill-towns and sometimes Middle-towns—which are scattered over the face of England

and of which Milton Abbas is perhaps the best-known instance. Then, again, there is a certain not undistinguished Isaac Newton, whose ancestors must similarly have come from one of the numerous Newtons, though not, I take it, from Newton Abbott (where I change to-day), because his family were Lincolnshire people, not West-countrymen. Ciceronian Middleton shows the alternative form to Milton. Among our poets alone we have a Chatterton, a Fenton, a Barton, a Stapleton, and a Warton; among philosophers, a Hamilton; and among miscellaneous celebrities may be mentioned Hutton the geologist, Waterton the naturalist, Sir Christopher Hatton, Leighton the Puritan, Daines Barrington, Crompton of the spinning-mule, Sir Joseph Paxton, Izaak Walton, the Pastons, Stephen Langton, Ireton, and a dozen more. The clan-villages by themselves supply an invaluable set of patronymics for the use of those misguided persons who attempt to write in double or treble rhymes, and then shirk the difficulties of their self-imposed task by a liberal employment of proper names; for they can match Addington with Paddington, Doddington with Boddington, and Babington with Habington to their hearts' content. All such surnames as Whitfield, Chillingworth, Atterbury, Dewhurst, Huntingdon, and Churchill also show immediately by their very form that they are of local origin.*

Another and more interesting way of testing the same principle is to take a particular tract of country, and then see how many of its villages have given rise to local surnames. Looking, for example, at my railway map of the district through which I am now travelling, I can pick out as I go a fair sprinkling of familiar cases. Wells gives its name to Dr. Charles Wells, the discoverer of the theory of dew. Weston has impartially supplied us with a great orientalist and a famous runner. Chard sent forth the family of the hero of Rorke's Drift. Anstey produced the ancestors of that characteristic fashionable eighteenth-century satirist, the author of the *New Bath Guide*. Coleridge hundred and village are forgotten in the fame of Coleridge poet. Thorne, Hatch, Bampton, Linton, Molton, Morton, Coppleston, Ashbury, Holsworthy, and Ashburton are all railway stations in the same immediate neighbourhood; and all have had representatives more or less famous in their way, either past or present. The judicious reader is left to fit the various names to the right persons at his own free discretion.

Thus, we can see by analogy pretty well how the Chadwick family came by their present surname. To sum it up shortly, they set out originally from some unknown village of Chadwick; this unknown village took its name from the fact that it was a wick or hamlet,

* Some of the names quoted above may be rather territorial than local—the difference will be explained hereafter—but let it pass. Anybody who likes can collect a whole host of undoubted local names in his own town, most of them derived from villages in the neighbourhood. There is a Bovey, a butcher at Bovey, and a Beer, a fisherman at Beer. I could multiply these instances by dozens, but I will let the reader off.

with a church dedicated to St. Chad ; and this St. Chad, again, is the Mercian bishop Ceadda, disguised under a mediæval or modernised form. But before I pass away from this part of my subject, I must add, lest all the Chadwicks in England should come down upon me with threatening letters—and, indeed, in these days, as M. Zola knows, it has become dangerous to deal too freely with genuine names—I must add, I say, that there is another class of local names besides the humble kind derived from the rustic village whence some unknown personage once emigrated. A fair sprinkling of such names are really territorial—they mark possession of a manor, after the fashion still common in Scotland to the present day. Perhaps, therefore, the original Chadwicks were really Chadwicks of Chadwick, and, for aught I know, they may very possibly have come over, like the Slys, with Richard Conqueror. If I have unintentionally maligned an ancient and honourable family, by supposing that one of their remote ancestors once honestly earned his own livelihood by his own handicraft, I hereby offer them whatever apology they may consider to be commensurate with the magnitude of the offence. But for our present purpose, where this particular name is merely taken as a peg whereon to hang sundry general analogies in nomenclature, it does not matter one jot or tittle to us whether the primitive father of all the Chadwicks was a Norman lord of the manor or an English serf—that profound question we may safely leave to the genealogist ; while, for my own part, I will frankly confess I had far rather my progenitors should have earned money to buy a manor, and left it to me, than that they should have once possessed one, and bequeathed to me only the empty honour of their manorial name. “But, sir, I am digressing,” as the rogue who quoted Manetho with such glib discontinuity very pertinently observed to the Vicar of Wakefield.

And now let us pass on to the remaining portion of the legend on Mr. Chadwick's card, his Christian or given name. And, first of all, let us begin with Edgar. Singularly enough, although he is an Englishman, he really bears an English name ; and this is curious, because, as I have already pointed out in this magazine, the majority of Englishmen bear either Norman-French or Biblical names, both which classes were for the most part introduced at the Norman conquest. Edgar, however, differs from the mass in being of genuine old-English or so-called Anglo-Saxon coinage. Let us consider first how the name ever came to exist at all, and next how a nineteenth-century Englishman comes to bear it at the present day.

Edgar belongs to the very oldest type of Aryan personal nomenclature, the type known as the double-list name. It was the common practice of that amiable barbarian, our Aryan ancestor, to manufacture names for his children in a certain very regular and systematic manner. One set of words or roots was considered proper for making the first half of a personal name ; while another set was considered proper for making the second half. When once a root was recognised as belonging by right

to either list, it was employed, pretty much at haphazard, to be compounded with any root out of the corresponding list, often with very little regard to the resulting meaning. Among the roots thus dedicated to the formation of names, the most common are those which relate to honour in war or personal bravery. Spear, helmet, war, victory; noble, glorious, great, illustrious; wolf and lion, folk and king, host and leader: these are the ideas that turn up oftenest in these primitive double-list names. Of course, we possess none of them in their very earliest Aryan form; but amongst all pure Aryan races we always find a number of such in closely analogous later shapes, though often disguised under different vocables. For example, we are familiar with such Hellenic instances as Heracles, Sophocles, and Themistocles, on the one hand, where the terminal element is the same throughout; or as Aristides, Aristoteles, and Aristobulus, on the other, where it is the initial element which reappears in all the series. How little regard was often paid to consistency of meaning is well shown by the classical instance of Pheidippides, a self-contradictory sort of name which can only be understood by the lucid explanation of Aristophanes.

In the Teutonic family, however, the double-list system is found in equal perfection, and it survives in most of our own existing Christian names. Thus William is divisible into two parts as Wil-helm, and Henry as Hean-rig or Hein-rich. The old English before the Norman conquest used a number of such names for the most part compounded of the following elements: as first halves, *athel*, noble; *ead*, rich or powerful; *elf*, an elf; *leaf*, dear; *ecg*, sword or edge; *theod*, people; *here*, army; *cyne*, royal; and *eald*, old or venerable: as second halves or terminals, *wine*, friend; *helm*, helmet; *gar*, spear; *gifu*, gift; *wig*, war; *mund*, guardianship; *weard* or *ward*, protection; *stan*, stone; *burh*, fortress; and *red*, counsel. The following were used indiscriminately as first or second halves: *wulf*, wolf; *beorht*, *berht*, or *briht*, bright, glorious; *sige*, victory; *ric*, rich or kingdom; and *god*, good. From such elements we can build up almost all the familiar old English royal or noble names. Thus, the West-Saxon kings and princes generally chose titles compounded of *athel*, such as Æthelred, Æthelwulf, Æthelberht, Æthelstan, and Æthelbald; illogically modernised as Ethelred, Ethelwulf, and Ethelbert on the one hand, by the side of Athelston on the other; or of *ead*, such as Eadgar, Eadred, Eadward, Eadwine, and Eadwulf; the surviving forms from which are Edgar, Edward, and Edwin, the other two being practically obsolete. The elves were also great protectors and objects of reverence to the early West Saxons; whence the names Ælfred, Ælfric, Ælfwine, Ælfward, and Ælfstan. All these can be readily understood from the list given above. The Northumbrian kings rather affected the initial root *os*, divine; as in Oswald, Osric, Oswiu, Osred, and Oslaf. This is the same word which sometimes reappears in its earlier Danish form as *ans*, in Anlaf, which finally became Olaf, and Olave—a name the last shapeless relic of which was borne by the eccentric violinist, Ole

Bull. The terminal *wine* is found in *Æsewine*, *Eadwine*, *Æthelwine*, *Oswine*, and *Ælfwine*, whose meanings need no further explanation. *Wulf* appears as the first half in *Wulfstan*, *Wulfric*, *Wulfred*, and *Wulphere*; while it forms the tail end of *Æthelwulf*, *Eadwulf*, *Ealdwulf*, and *Cyne-wulf*. Its Scandinavian form is *Ulf*. Hereberht gives us our modern *Herbert*—O irony of fate for Mr. Herbert Spencer!—while *Berhtic*, *Beorhtwulf*, *Æthelberht*, and *Eadbriht* supply us with other examples of the same root. After these examples, I think my readers can make out for themselves the meanings of *Godgiftu*, atrociously modernised into *Lady Godiva*; of *Theodric* or *Theodoric*, which looks so fallaciously Greek at first sight; and of such names as *Eadwig* (*Edwy*), *Egberht* (*Egbert*), *Sigeberht* (*Sebert*), or *Eadmund* (*Edmund*).

I need hardly point out in passing how essentially savage, or at least barbaric, are the fundamental ideas conveyed by these fanciful primitive names. Like so many other things which go to make up our shallow veneer of civilisation, they are legacies from early savagery, handed down to remind us whence we came, and whither, unless we bestir ourselves, we may yet relapse. The skin-deep French proverb is true of others besides Russians and Tartars—scratch the cultivated European, and you get the untamed neolithic barbarian. Some of the names or elements point back simply to early warlike habits: such are *here*, army; *helm*, helmet; *ecg*, sword; *wig*, war; and *sige*, victory. Others bear traces of the older heathen worship: for example, *Ælfred*, elf-counsel; *Ælfwine*, elf's-friend, and *Ælfward*, elf-protected; while the terminal *stan*, stone, contains an obvious reference to the ancient sanctity of megalithic structures. *Wulf*, again, with many other less common roots, distinctly recalls the primitive stage of totem-worship; and it is not without interest in this connection that most very early coins also contain as device the head or complete body of some totem-animal, or figures of the sun and other similar totem-objects. Thus the very names which we still bear are themselves forgotten relics of extremely ancient heathen savagery.

The word *Edgar*, originally *Eadgar*, may be roughly translated as equivalent to *Noble Spear*, or perhaps rather to *Spear-noble* or *Noble Spearman*; for exactly to render it in modern English would be as difficult as exactly to render *Sophocles* or *Anaxagoras*. It is thus a true old English name, composed entirely of English elements, without any foreign admixture whatsoever. And now the question arises, How does a modern Englishman come to bear this truly English name? We know that immediately after the Norman conquest almost all our original Christian names went suddenly out of fashion; and that every *Godric* or *Wulfsgie* in the land began to call his children after the *Williams*, *Walters*, *Roberts*, *Rogers*, *Ralphs*, and *Richards* who had come over in the train of the Conqueror. Most of these new-fangled forms (as I have before pointed out) were Old High German, taken into Gaul by the Franks, corrupted on the lips of the Celtic Neustrian peasantry, and further degraded by the Scandinavian settlers in Normandy. A few,

however, like Arthur, Owen, and Alan, were Breton Welsh. At the same time, the new lords of the English manors also introduced a number of Scriptural names, such as Johan or John, Thomas, Simon, Stephen, Piers or Peter, James, and Matthew. These new names wholly crushed out the Æthelreds and Ælfwards of pre-Norman days, as well as the once fashionable Harolds, Swegens, Olafs, and Erics, which the English had borrowed from their Danish lords; so that when we think nowadays of mediæval England, Guy and Gilbert, Hugh and Geoffrey, Wat and Perkin, not Dudda or Ælfstan, are the typical sounds that rise instinctively to our lips.

There were only two genuine English forms that really survived the great revolution in nomenclature of the eleventh century. Those names were Eadward and Eadmund; and they owed their continued existence entirely to the personal favour of Henry III. That superstitious and futile Angevin took it into his head to venerate above all other saints the only two saintly, or half-saintly, English kings; doubtless because he hoped, after his craven fashion, to be canonised and worshipped in his turn as they were. (I don't often find myself in the same boat with Mr. Freeman, but I confess to a personal animosity against Henry III.) Well, to further this sanctimonious scheme, Henry pulled down the great Abbey of Edward the Confessor at Westminster, and rebuilt in its place the noble church that we all know so well; and in it he placed the shrine of Edward, as he hoped some other king would hereafter place a shrine to his own saintship. Also, he called his eldest son, Edward I., by the Confessor's name; while his second son, Edmund Crouchback, Earl of Lancaster, was christened in honour of St. Edmund of East Anglia, the local underking of Norfolk and Suffolk, who was killed by the Danes during the first heathen invasion, and was accounted ever after as the patron saint of the Eastern counties, with his great shrine at Bury St. Edmunds. These are the first two instances, and almost the only instances I know, where men of Norman or Angevin descent were ever called by native English names. The royal example, however, soon proved contagious; and when once Edward and Edmund were recognised as forming part of the regular dynastic list, they soon spread down again to all classes of the people. Throughout the whole of the middle ages, they were the only two living English names; even Alfred and Edwin, now so common, having become temporarily obsolete. As a proof we may all see that Edwards and Edmunds are familiar surnames; but nobody ever met with an Alfreds or an Edwins. The two first were ordinary Christian names, during the age when surnames were being fixed, and so they gave rise to patronymics; but the two last were then practically dead, and so they never brought forth a filial form.

So far, we are no nearer accounting for Mr. Edgar B. Chadwick's foremost Christian name than ever. For Edgar was one of the suspended list—one of the names that had died out at the Norman conquest. But with the Renaissance, and still more with the Reformation,

a spirit of freedom with regard to nomenclature began to get abroad, as it always does during such crises, notoriously in the Puritan days and in the French Revolution. Instead of calling their children strictly after familiar saints, or sticking to the accustomed round of Roberts, Williams, Henries, and Edwards, the men of the Tudor epoch began to strike out fresh lines for themselves, and to seek a little variety in foreign parts or in the fashionable pages of classical antiquity. It is then probably for the first time that we meet in England with a Julius or a Valentine, a Cyril or a Cyprian, a Rowland or a Jeremy. The new names came for the most part from three sources—Greek or Roman history, the Fathers, and the mediæval romances. They represented the three main currents of thought in the Tudor period: the classicist revival, the religious and patristic interest, and the fanciful romantic tone of mind typified by Spencer, or to a less degree by Shakespeare and the dramatists.

But there was also a decided undercurrent of inquiry into the earlier mediæval or transitional history of England which manifested itself in Camden's *Britannia*, in Ussher's *Antiquities of the British Church*, in Verstegan's *Decayed Intelligence*, and in Fuller's *Church History and Worthies of England*. Stow's *London*, and other books of the same period, show the same general tendency. At the same time, a revived interest began to be felt in the older form of our language, commonly called Anglo-Saxon; and this interest culminated in the publication of the first Anglo-Saxon dictionary, and of a few selected texts, including that invaluable monument of our early history, the *English Chronicle*. As a slight lateral result of the increased attention thus paid to early English annals, a few of our most famous old historical names began once more to take their place in popular nomenclature. Naturally, the first to be chosen were those which most resembled the then surviving Edward and Edmund; and of these, Edgar and Edwin were the only two that took with the people. I am inclined to attribute the modern popularity of Edwin, however, mainly to the influence of Edwin and Angelina, which also burdened us with the most affectedly insupportable of female names, even in an age which produced Miss Wilhelmina Carolina Amelia Skeggs herself. What determined the modest acceptance of Edgar, a far rarer name, it would be difficult to say; nor can one quite see why it should have been allowed to pass muster, when Edred, Edwy, Edwolf, and Edric failed to obtain even a hearing. The names compounded with *æthel* were far less fortunate. Ethelred and Ethelbert feebly survived as "fancy names" in a few original families; I have once met with an Athelston; while Ethelwolf and Ethelbald are, I believe, as dead as Julius Cæsar—indeed, far deader, for Jules Cæsar still lives on in France, and I dare say Sir Julius Cæsar, the statesman of Elizabeth's time, has left some homonyms among his kindred to the present day. As to Ethel, a single element which could not have formed a name by itself in earlier ages, it is said (I know not how truly) to owe its vogue as a female name to Thackeray's heroine in the *Newcomes*. Alfred,

I believe, was revived a little later than Edwin; and no other *elf*-name has taken root in modern England. Harold is also quite a modern innovation, not appearing, I believe, before the eighteenth century, and doubtless largely helped on in later days by Lord Lytton's historical romance. On the other hand, Mr. Skimpole must have dealt it a deadly blow. In all these later cases, the dates must be taken as purely approximate; and it is quite possible that some of my readers may have observed earlier instances of an Alfred, an Edwin, or an Athelston than any that I myself have noted; for since once the principle of freedom in nomenclature was introduced at the Renaissance, one can never answer for sporadic cases of individual fancy here and there among the multitude. Was not Preserved Fish a historical American character?—and even in our own land did not Praise-God Barbones once sit upon the benches of Parliament?

By the time that Mr. Edgar B. Chadwick made his appearance upon this oblate spheroid the name Edgar had been fully restored to public use, and was considered as one of those which even eminently respectable and stolidly philistine parents might lawfully bestow upon their youthful progeny. Hence I hold that we have now satisfactorily accounted for its origin and history, from the earliest ages to the present day. Only one question still remains: What are we to make of that mysterious B.? At first sight it has an unpleasantly American sound: it suggests too vividly Mr. Silas P. Sawin or the Rev. Leonidas H. Smiley. Now, to the student of nomenclature, this is not a small matter. It usually betokens a certain type of mind—a kind of weak-kneed sense of personality, a lack of healthy individual feeling, which is characteristic of most American citizens. They are too much like ants in a nest; you must put a dab of red paint on their backs, as Sir John Lubbock does with his bees and wasps, in order to remember which is which. There are so many Jeffersons and Hiram and Ulysses that they have to label themselves Jefferson P. Hitchcock, Hiram H. Coffin, or Ulysses S. Grant, in order not to get mixed up in sorting. They all think alike, speak alike, and act alike. When one of them opens his mouth on any given subject, you know what he is going to say about it as well as you know what the *Daily Intelligence* and the *Morning Pennon* will respectively observe in their able leaders on the last masterly stroke of Mr. Thingummy's Falkland Island policy. Therefore this mode of nomenclature ought to be promptly suppressed in favour of a more individualistic style. Why must every man be symmetrically labelled as John P. Robinson, or as Ebenezer H. Simkiss? What paucity of invention it shows to begin every child's name with a William or a Thomas, and then to mark them off from one another by letters of the alphabet, as if they were selected varieties of scarlet geraniums, or budding members of the metropolitan police force. Yet it is a positive fact that in America the letter B. or P., or whatever it may be, often stands for no suppressed Christian name whatsoever, but is simply

stuck in to ensure uniformity, and to save the parents the trouble of inventing a second prenomén. When one reflects how much of a man's success in life depends upon his name—how ridiculous he may be made by being called Peter Potter or Lovebond Snooks—it is really sad that parents pay so little attention to the effect of their choice upon the future of their children. They will register their first-born as Muggins Macpherson, if they happen to have a rich uncle who boasts Muggins as his surname; they will spoil a pretty patronymic by christening their child Jeremiah Seymour or Aminadab Clifford; they will even turn him out anonymously upon the world with such an apology for a cognomen as John Smith or William Jones, Patrick O'Brian, or Angus Cameron. And yet a little fancy or a little care might make an endless difference to his future life. I have known a man whose whole career was embittered and darkened by the culpable cruelty of his parents in christening him Barnabas. He was naturally known as Barabbas from his school-days onward, and only the force of great innate integrity can possibly have saved him from finally turning out a robber and a cut-throat. As it was, he refused knighthood as a colonial judge, because he could not endure the idea of being addressed as Sir Barnabas.

Now, Edgar B. Chadwick's middle name is, as I know from independent evidence, a far more harmless one; yet it is one that does not sort well with its immediate surroundings. It is Baxter; and Edgar Baxter makes an ugly assonance which ought always to be avoided in these matters. As usual, an uncle was at the bottom of the mischief; and, as usual, he left his money to the other side of the house. Had it been otherwise, I think my acquaintance would have called himself E. Baxter Chadwick: an awkward modern formula almost worse than the alternative he has actually adopted. Concerning this second name of Baxter, there are one or two minor things to be said. First of all note the fact that he bears two Christian names at all. In England this practice is a comparatively recent one. I do not know of a single instance during the middle ages; and even in the seventeenth century it was extremely rare. On the continent, it began apparently with the custom of calling a child after two saints at once, as in the case of Boiardo, whose Christian name was Matteo Maria, and of the common Jean Maries, Jean Pauls, Jean Jacques, and Giovanni Andreas of France and Italy; or after a double-named saint, as in the case of Jean Baptiste or François Xavier. But the Italians seem to have been the first to use genuine double names like Marco Antonio, or Giovanni Ambrogio; and the habit spread into France at least as early as the seventeenth century, and invaded England with the eighteenth. It has even been held to be the true cause of Jacobinism and radicalism, and it certainly grew with the growth of the century. While William Shakespeare and John Milton were content with a single Christian name each, Shelley and Coleridge had a pair, and many lesser people nowadays have half-a-dozen. A tax upon supernumerary Christian names, indeed, might check such bound-

less extravagance in future; and the hint is presented gratis to any Chancellor of the Exchequer who wishes at once to benefit the revenue and put a stop to a growing public nuisance. One poor Liverpool merchant was actually so burdened with extra names by his parents that the task of drawing up and signing his legal documents became absolutely insupportable, and he was obliged to seek relief in a royal warrant, authorising him to dispose unceremoniously of those additional cognomens for which he had no further use.

In England, it has been most usual, since the dual name came into fashion, to make the first element an old and well-known Christian name—either a saint-name or a form chosen from the Norman-French list—and to employ a family surname for the second. This is the principle followed in Edgar Chadwick's case. The name Baxter belongs to his mother's house; and of course it has a history and meaning of its own. The Baxters belong to the same class as the Masons, the Carpenters, the Taylors, the Smiths, the Gardiners, and the Fullers. In fact, the surnames derived from trades or occupations are more numerous than those of any other class, except patronymics and place-names. Some of them belong to existing trades, like those quoted above; while others represent obsolete trades, or at least obsolete trade terminology, like the Fletchers, or arrow-makers, the Arblasters who manufactured cross-bows or arblasts (*arcubalistæ*), and the Tuckers who worked in the tucking-mills where cloth was prepared for market. Those who wish for further information upon these subjects cannot do better than turn to Mr. Bardsley's excellent and systematic work on English surnames.

A man who bakes is called a Baker; but in earlier times a woman who bakes was called a Bakester, or Baxter. So a man who brews is a Brewer, while a woman who brews is a Brewster. In mediæval English, the termination "ster" was a feminine one; and it still survives with its primitive signification in spinster. A huckster was originally a market-woman, but the word has now come to mean anybody, male or female, who hawks about goods in the public streets. The same change has come over maltster, throwster, and many other analogous words. But sundry surnames still show us the two forms side by side, as in Webber and Webster. Hence we may conclude that the ancestor of all the Baxters was a woman who kept a bakehouse. Why her descendants should take their name from her, rather than from their father, is easy enough to understand on a number of natural hypotheses. Joan Baxter may in one place have been a widow-woman, whose children would of course be called after her; in another place she might be a person of some character, while her husband was a field labourer or a ne'er-do-well; and in another, again, there might be two Piers Gardeners or two Wat Carters in the same village, so that it might be more convenient to describe the youngsters by their mother's calling than by their father's. Indeed, besides the Brewsters, Baxters, Websters, and other female trade-names, there are a few true metronymics in England, such as Anson

and Mallison, though many that seem to be such are really patronymics from obsolete male-names, as in the case of Nelson, which is not Nell's son, but Niel's son, or Neal's son, just like the Scandinavian Nilsson.

So there you have a full, true, and particular account of Mr. Edgar B. Chadwick's visiting card; and as I write the last note "Baxter, Brewster, Anson, Nelson," the train is just steaming into Newton Abbott station. I have no time for more, as I have to look after my luggage in the scrimmage. But is it not a wonderful thought that every one of us thus carries about with him every day a perfect philological fossil in the way of a personal name, which throws its roots far back into the dim past of heathen savage ages? Is it not a wonderful thought—label for Moreton Hampstead, if you please, and just two minutes to catch the five-forty down train. The Stoic held that the philosopher should be superior to all external circumstances; but then the Stoic never attempted to philosophise in a railway station.

G. A.

A Night in the Red Sea.

THE strong hot breath of the land is lashing
 The wild sea horses, they rear and race;
 The plunging bows of our ship are dashing
 Full in the fiery south wind's face.

She rends the water, it foams and follows,
 And the silvery jet of the towering spray,
 And the phosphor sparks in the deep wave hollows,
 Lighten the line of our midnight way.

The moon above, with its full-orb'd lustre,
 Lifting the veil of the slumb'rous land,
 Gleams o'er a desolate island cluster,
 And the breakers white on the lonely sand.

And a bare hill-range in the distance frowning
Dim wrapt in haze like a shrouded ghost,
With its jagged peaks the horizon crowning,
Broods o'er the stark Arabian coast.

See, on the edge of the waters leaping,
The lamp, far flashing, of Perim's Strait
Glitters and grows, as the ship goes sweeping
Fast on its course for the Exile's gate.

And onward still to the broadening ocean
Out of the narrow and perilous seas,
Till we rock with a large and listless motion
In the moist soft air of the Indian breeze.

And the Southern Cross, like a standard flying,
Hangs in the front of the tropic night,
But the Great Bear sinks, like a hero dying,
And the Pole-star lowers its signal light.

And the round earth rushes toward the morning,
And the waves grow paler and wan the foam;
Misty and dim, with a glance of warning,
Vanish the stars of my Northern home.

Let the wide waste sea for a space divide me
Till the close-coil'd circles of time unfold—
Till the stars rise westward to greet and guide me
When the exile ends, and the years are told.

The Palace of Urbino.

I.

AT Rimini, one spring, the impulse came upon us to make our way across San Marino to Urbino. In the Piazza, called apocryphally after Julius Cæsar, I found a proper vetturino, with a good carriage and two indefatigable horses. He was a splendid fellow, and bore a great historic name, as I discovered when our bargain was completed. "What are you called?" I asked him. "*Filippo Visconti, per servirla!*" was the prompt reply. Brimming over with the darkest memories of the Italian Renaissance, I hesitated when I heard this answer. The associations seemed too ominous. And yet the man himself was so attractive—tall, stalwart, and well-looking—no feature of his face or limb of his athletic form recalling the gross tyrant who concealed worse than Caligula's ugliness from sight in secret chambers—that I shook this preconception from my mind. As it turned out, Filippo Visconti had nothing in common with his infamous namesake but the name. On a long and trying journey, he showed neither sullen nor yet ferocious tempers: nor, at the end of it, did he attempt by any master-stroke of craft to wheedle from me more than his fair pay; but took the meerschaum pipe I gave him for a keepsake, with the frank good-will of an accomplished gentleman. The only exhibition of his hot Italian blood which I remember, did his humanity credit. While we were ascending a steep hill-side, he jumped from his box to thrash a ruffian by the roadside for brutal treatment to a little boy. He broke his whip, it is true, in this encounter; risked a dangerous quarrel; and left his carriage, with myself and wife inside it, to the mercy of his horses in a somewhat perilous position. But when he came back, hot and glowing, from this deed of justice, I could only applaud his zeal.

An Italian of this type, handsome as an antique statue, with the refinement of a modern gentleman and that intelligence which is innate in a race of immemorial culture, is a fascinating being. He may be absolutely ignorant in all book-learning. He may be as ignorant as a Bersagliere from Montalcino with whom I once conversed at Rimini, who gravely said that he could walk in three months to North America, and thought of doing it when his term of service was accomplished. But he will display, as this young soldier did, a grace and ease of address which are rare in London drawing-rooms; and by his shrewd remarks upon the cities he has visited, will show that he possesses a fine natural taste for things of beauty. The speech of such men, drawn from the common

stock of the Italian people, is seasoned with proverbial sayings; the wisdom of centuries condensed in a few nervous words. When emotion fires their brain, they break into spontaneous eloquence, or suggest the motive of a poem by phrases pregnant with imagery.

For the first stage of the journey out of Rimini, Filippo's two horses sufficed. The road led almost straight across the level between quickset hedges in white bloom. But when we reached the long steep hill which ascends to San Marino, the inevitable oxen were called out, and we toiled upwards leisurely through cornfields bright with red anemones and sweet narcissus. At this point pomegranate hedges replaced the May-thorns of the plain. In course of time our *bovi* brought us to the Borgo, or lower town, whence there is a further ascent of seven hundred feet to the topmost hawk's-nest or acropolis of the republic. These we climbed on foot, watching the view expand around us and beneath. Crags of limestone here break down abruptly to the rolling hills, which go to lose themselves in field and shore. Misty reaches of the Adriatic close the world to eastward. Cesena, Rimini, Verucchio, and countless hill-set villages, each isolated on its tract of verdure conquered from the stern grey soil, define the points where Montefeltri wrestled with Malatestas in long bygone years. Around are marly mountain-flanks in wrinkles and gnarled convolutions like some giant's brain, furrowed by rivers crawling through dry wasteful beds of shingle. Interminable ranges of gaunt Apennines stretch, tier by tier, beyond; and over all this landscape, a grey-green mist of rising crops and new-fledged oak-trees lies like a veil upon the nakedness of Nature's ruins.

Nothing in Europe conveys a more striking sense of geological antiquity than such a prospect. The denudation and abrasion of innumerable ages, wrought by slow persistent action of weather and water on an upheaved mountain mass, are here made visible. Every wave in that vast sea of hills, every furrow in their worn flanks, tells its tale of a continuous corrosion still in progress. The dominant impression is one of melancholy. We forget how Romans, countermarching Carthaginians, trod the land beneath us. The marvel of San Marino, retaining independence through the drums and trappings of the last seven centuries, is swallowed in a deeper sense of wonder. We turn instinctively in thought to Leopardi's musings on man's destiny at war with unknown nature-forces and malignant rulers of the universe.

Omai disprezza

Te, la natura, il brutto

Poter che, ascoso, a comun danno impera,

E l' infinita vanità del tutto.

And then, straining our eyes southward, we sweep the dim blue distance for Recanati, and remember that the poet of modern despair and discouragement was reared in even such a scene as this.

The town of San Marino is grey, narrow-streeted, simple; with

a great, new, decent, Greek-porticoed, Cathedral, dedicated to the eponymous saint. A certain austerity defines it from more picturesque hill-cities with a less uniform history. There is a marble statue of S. Marino in the choir of his church; and in his cell is shown the stone bed and pillow on which he took austere repose. One narrow window near the saint's abode commands a proud but melancholy landscape of distant hills and seaboard. To this, the great absorbing charm of San Marino, our eyes instinctively, recurrently, take flight. It is a landscape which by variety and beauty thralls attention, but which by its interminable sameness might grow almost overpowering. There is no relief. The gladness shed upon far humbler Northern lands in May, is ever absent here. The German word *Gemüthlichkeit*, the English phrase "a home of ancient peace," are here alike by art and nature untranslated into visibilities. And yet (as we who gaze upon it thus are fain to think) if peradventure the intolerable *ennui* of this panorama should drive a citizen of San Marino into outlands, the same view would haunt him whithersoever he went—the swallows of his native eyrie would shrill through his sleep—he would yearn to breathe its fine keen air in winter, and to watch its iris-hedges deck themselves with blue in spring—like Virgil's hero, dying, he would think of San Marino: *Aspicit, et dulces moriens reminiscitur Argos*. Even a passing stranger may feel the mingled fascination and oppression of this prospect—the monotony which maddens, the charm which at a distance grows upon the mind, envioning it with memories.

Descending to the Borgo, we found that Filippo Visconti had ordered a luncheon of excellent white bread, pigeons, and omelette, with the best red muscat wine I ever drank, unless the sharp air of the hills deceived my appetite. An Italian history of San Marino, including its statutes, in three volumes, furnished intellectual food. But I confess to having learned from these pages little else than this: first, that the survival of the Commonwealth through all phases of European politics had been semi-miraculous; secondly, that the most eminent San Marinesi had been lawyers. It is possible on a hasty deduction from these two propositions (to which, however, I am far from wishing to commit myself), that the latter is a sufficient explanation of the former.

From San Marino the road plunges at a break-neck pace. We are now in the true Feltrian highlands, whence the Counts of Montefeltro issued in the twelfth century. Yonder eyrie is San Leo, which formed the key of entrance to the Duchy of Urbino in campaigns fought many hundred years ago. Perched on the crest of a precipitous rock, this fortress looks as though it might defy all enemies but famine. And yet San Leo was taken and re-taken by strategy and fraud, when Montefeltro, Borgia, Malatesta, Rovere, contended for dominion in these valleys. Yonder is Sta. Agata, the village to which Guidobaldo fled by night when Valentino drove him from his dukedom. A little further towers Carpegna, where one branch of the Montefeltro house maintained a

countship through seven centuries, and only sold their fief to Rome in 1815. Monte Coppiolo lies behind, Pietra Rubia in front: two other eagle's-nests of the same brood. What a road it is! It beats the tracks on Exmoor. The uphill and downhill of Devonshire scorns compromise or mitigation by *détour* and zigzag. But here geography is on a scale so far more vast, and the roadway is so far worse metalled than with us in England — knotty masses of talc and nodes of sandstone cropping up at dangerous turnings — that only Dante's words describe the journey:—

Vassi in Sanleo, e discendesi in Nolj,
 Montasi su Bismantova in cacume
 Con esso i piè; ma qui convien ch' uom voli.

Of a truth, our horses seemed rather to fly than scramble up and down these rugged precipices; Visconti cheerily animating them with the brave spirit that was in him, and lending them his wary driver's help of hand and voice at need.

We were soon upon a cornice-road between the mountains and the Adriatic: following the curves of gulch and cleft ravine; winding round ruined castles set on points of vantage; the sea-line high above their grass-grown battlements, the shadow-dappled champaign girdling their bastions morticed on the naked rock. Except for the blue lights across the distance, and the ever-present sea, these earthy Apennines would be too grim. Infinite air and this spare veil of spring-tide greenery on field and forest, soothe their sternness. Two rivers, swollen by late rains, had to be forded. Through one of these, the Foglia, bare-legged peasants led the way. The horses waded to their bellies in the tawny water. Then more hills and vales; green nooks with rippling corn-crops; secular oaks attired in golden leafage. The clear afternoon air rang with the voices of a thousand larks overhead. The whole world seemed quivering with light and delicate ethereal sound. And yet my mind turned irresistibly to thoughts of war, violence, and pillage. How often has this intermediate land been fought over by Montefeltro and Brancaleoni, by Borgia and Malatesta, by Medici and Della Rovere! Its *contadini* are robust men, almost statuesque in build, and beautiful of feature. No wonder that the Princes of Urbino, with such materials to draw from, sold their service and their troops to Florence, Rome, St. Mark, and Milan. The bearing of these peasants is still soldierly and proud. Yet they are not sullen or forbidding like the Sicilians, whose habits of life, for the rest, much resemble theirs. The villages, there as here, are few and far between, perched high on rocks, from which the folk descend to till the ground and reap the harvest. But the southern *brusquerie* and brutality are absent from this district. The men have something of the dignity and slow-eyed mildness of their own huge oxen. As evening fell, more solemn Apennines upreared themselves to southward. The Monte d'Asdrubale, Monte Nerone, and Monte Catria hove into sight. At last, when light was dim, a tower

rose above the neighbouring ridge, a broken outline of some city barred the sky-line. Urbino stood before us. Our long day's march was at an end.

The sunset was almost spent, and a four days' moon hung above the western Apennines, when we took our first view of the palace. It is a fancy-thralling work of wonder seen in that dim twilight; like some castle reared by Atlante's magic for imprisonment of Ruggiero, or palace sought in fairy-land by Astolf winding his enchanted horn. Where shall we find its like, combining, as it does, the buttressed battlemented bulk of mediæval strongholds with the airy balconies, suspended gardens, and fantastic turrets of Italian pleasure-houses? This unique blending of the feudal past with the Renaissance spirit of the time when it was built, connects it with the art of Ariosto—or more exactly with Boiardo's epic. Duke Federigo planned his palace at Urbino just at the moment when the Count of Scandiano had begun to chaunt his lays of Roland in the Castle of Ferrara. Chivalry, transmuted by the Italian genius into something fanciful and quaint, survived as a frail work of art. The men-at-arms of the Condottieri still glittered in gilded hauberks. Their helmets waved with plumes and bizarre crests. Their surcoats blazed with heraldries; their velvet caps with medals bearing legendary emblems. The pomp and circumstance of feudal war had not yet yielded to the cannon of the Gascon or the Switzer's pike. The fatal age of foreign invasions had not begun for Italy. Within a few years Charles VIII.'s holiday excursion would reveal the internal rotteness and weakness of her rival States, and the peninsula for half a century to come would be drenched in the blood of Frenchmen, Germans, Spaniards, fighting for her cities as their prey. But now Lorenzo dei Medici was still alive. The famous policy which bears his name, held Italy suspended for a golden time in false tranquillity and independence. The princes who shared his culture and his love of art, were gradually passing into modern noblemen, abandoning the savage feuds and passions of more virile centuries, yielding to luxury and scholarly enjoyments. The castles were becoming Courts, and despotisms won by force were settling into dynasties.

It was just at this epoch that Duke Federigo built his castle at Urbino. One of the ablest and wealthiest Condottieri of his time, one of the best instructed and humanest of Italian princes, he combined in himself the qualities which mark that period of transition. And these he impressed upon his dwelling-house, which looks backward to the mediæval fortalice and forward to the modern palace. This makes it the just embodiment in architecture of Italian romance, the perfect analogue of the *Orlando Innamorato*. By comparing it with the Castle of the Estes at Ferrara, and the Palazzo del Te of the Gonzagas at Mantua, we place it in its right position between mediæval and Renaissance Italy, between the age when principalities arose upon the ruins of commercial independence and the age when they became dynastic under Spain.

The exigencies of the ground at his disposal forced Federigo to give the building an irregular outline. The fine façade, with its embayed *loggie* and flanking turrets, is placed too close upon the city ramparts for its due effect. We are obliged to cross the deep ravine which separates it from a lower quarter of the town, and take our station near the Oratory of St. Giovanni Battista, before we can appreciate the beauty of its design, or the boldness of the group it forms with the Cathedral dome and tower and the square masses of numerous out-buildings. Yet this peculiar position of the palace, though baffling to a close observer of its details, is one of singular advantage to the inhabitants. Set on the verge of Urbino's towering eminence, it fronts a wave-tossed sea of vales and mountain summits toward the rising and the setting sun. There is nothing but illimitable air between the terraces and *loggias* of the Duchess's apartments and the spreading pyramid of Monte Catria.

A nobler scene is nowhere swept from palace windows than this, which Castiglione touched in a memorable passage at the end of his *Cortegiano*. To one who in our day visits Urbino, it is singular how the slight indications of this sketch, as in some silhouette, bring back the antique life, and link the present with the past—a hint, perhaps, for reticence in our descriptions. The gentlemen and ladies of the Court had spent a summer night in long debate on love, rising to the height of mystical Platonic rapture on the lips of Bembo, when one of them exclaimed, "The day has broken!" "He pointed to the light which was beginning to enter by the fissures of the windows. Whereupon we flung the casements wide upon that side of the palace which looks toward the high peak of Monte Catria, and saw that a fair dawn of rosy hue was born already in the eastern skies, and all the stars had vanished except the sweet regent of the heaven of Venus, who holds the border-lands of day and night; and from her sphere it seemed as though a gentle wind were breathing, filling the air with eager freshness, and waking among the numerous woods upon the neighbouring hills the sweet-toned symphonies of joyous birds."

II.

The House of Montefeltro rose into importance early in the twelfth century. Frederick Barbarossa erected their fief into a County in 1160. Supported by imperial favour, they began to exercise an undefined authority over the district, which they afterwards converted into a Duchy. But, though Ghibelline for several generations, the Montefeltri were too near neighbours of the Papal power to free themselves from ecclesiastical vassalage. Therefore in 1216 they sought and obtained the title of Vicars of the Church. Urbino acknowledged them as semi-despots in their double capacity of Imperial and Papal Deputies. Cagli and Gubbio followed in the fourteenth century. In the fifteenth, Castel Durante was acquired from the Brancaleoni by warfare, and Fossombrone

from the Malatestas by purchase. Numerous fiefs and villages fell into their hands upon the borders of Rimini in the course of a continued struggle with the House of Malatesta ; and when Fano and Pesaro were added at the opening of the sixteenth century, the domain over which they ruled was a compact territory, some forty miles square, between the Adriatic and the Apennines. From the close of the thirteenth century they bore the title of Counts of Urbino. The famous Conte Guido, whom Dante placed among the fraudulent in hell, supported the honours of the house and increased its power by his political action, at this epoch. But it was not until the year 1443 that the Montefeltri acquired their ducal title. This was conferred by Eugenius IV. upon Oddantonio, over whose alleged crimes and indubitable assassination a veil of mystery still hangs. He was the son of Count Guidantonio, and at his death the Montefeltri of Urbino were extinct in the legitimate line. A natural son of Guidantonio had been, however, recognised in his father's life-time, and married to Gentile, heiress of Mercatello. This was Federigo, a youth of great promise, who succeeded his half-brother in 1444 as Count of Urbino. It was not until 1474 that the ducal title was revived for him.

Duke Frederick was a prince remarkable among Italian despots for private virtues and sober use of his hereditary power. He spent his youth at Mantua, in that famous school of Vittorino da Feltre, where the sons and daughters of the first Italian nobility received a model education in humanities, good manners, and gentle physical accomplishments. More than any of his fellow-students Frederick profited by this rare scholar's discipline. On leaving school he adopted the profession of arms, as it was then practised, and joined the troop of the Condottiere Niccolò Piccinino. Young men of his own rank, especially the younger sons and bastards of ruling families, sought military service under captains of adventure. If they succeeded they were sure to make money. The coffers of the Church and the republics lay open to their not too scrupulous hands ; the wealth of Milan and Naples was squandered on them in retaining-fees and salaries for active service. There was always the further possibility of placing a coronet upon their brows before they died, if haply they should wrest a town from their employers, or obtain the cession of a province from a needy Pope. The neighbours of the Montefeltri in Umbria, Romagna, and the Marches of Ancona, were all of them Condottieri. Malatestas of Rimini and Pesaro, Vitelli of Città di Castello, Varani of Camerino, Baglioni of Perugia, to mention only a few of the most eminent nobles, enrolled themselves under the banners of plebeian adventurers like Piccinino and Sforza Attendolo. Though their family connections gave them a certain advantage, the system was essentially democratic. Gattamelata and Carmagnola sprang from obscurity by personal address and courage to the command of armies. Colleoni fought his way up from the grooms to princely station and the *bâton* of St. Mark. Francesco Sforza, whose

father had begun life as a tiller of the soil, seized the ducal crown of Milan, and founded a house which ranked among the first in Europe.

It is not needful to follow Duke Frederick in his military career. We may briefly remark that when he succeeded to Urbino by his brother's death in 1444, he undertook generalship on a grand scale. His own dominions supplied him with some of the best troops in Italy. He was careful to secure the good-will of his subjects, by attending personally to their interests, relieving them of imposts, and executing equal justice. He gained the then unique reputation of an honest prince, paternally disposed toward his dependents. Men flocked to his standards willingly, and he was able to bring an important contingent into any army. These advantages secured for him alliances with Francesco Sforza, and brought him successively into connection with Milan, Venice, Florence, the Church and Naples. As a tactician in the field he held high rank among the generals of the age, and so considerable were his engagements that he acquired great wealth in the exercise of his profession. We find him at one time receiving 8,000 ducats a month as war-pay from Naples, with a peace pension of 6,000. While Captain-General of the League, he drew for his own use in war 45,000 ducats of annual pay. Retaining-fees and pensions in the name of past services swelled his income, the exact extent of which has not, so far as I am aware, been estimated, but which must have made him one of the richest of Italian princes. All this wealth he spent upon his duchy, fortifying and beautifying its cities, drawing youths of promise to his Court, maintaining a great train of life, and keeping his vassals in good-humour by the lightness of a rule which contrasted favourably with the exactions of needier despots.

While fighting for the masters who offered him *condotta* in the complicated wars of Italy, Duke Frederick used his arms, when occasion served, in his own quarrels. Many years of his life were spent in a prolonged struggle with his neighbour Sigismondo Pandolfo Malatesta, the bizarre and brilliant tyrant of Rimini, who committed the fatal error of embroiling himself beyond all hope of pardon with the Church, and who died discomfited in the duel with his warier antagonist. Urbino profited by each mistake of Sigismondo, and the history of this long desultory strife with Rimini is a history of gradual aggrandisement and consolidation for the Montefeltrian Duchy.

In 1459, Duke Frederick married his second wife, Battista, daughter of Alessandro Sforza, Lord of Pesaro. Their portraits, painted by Piero della Francesca, are to be seen in the Uffizzi at Florence. Some years earlier, Frederick lost his right eye and had the bridge of his nose broken in a jousting match outside the town-gate of Urbino. After this accident, he preferred to be represented in profile—the profile so well known to students of Italian art on medals and bas-reliefs. It was not without medical aid and vows fulfilled by a mother's self-sacrifice to death, if we may trust the diarists of Urbino, that the ducal couple got

an heir. In 1472, however, a son was born to them, whom they christened Guido Paolo Ubaldo. He proved a youth of excellent parts and noble nature—apt at study, perfect in all chivalrous accomplishments. But he inherited some fatal physical debility, and his life was marred with a constitutional disease, which then received the name of gout, and which deprived him of the free use of his limbs. After his father's death, in 1482, Naples, Florence, and Milan continued Frederick's war engagements to Guidobaldo. The prince was but a boy of ten. Therefore these important *condotte* must be regarded as compliments and pledges for the future. They prove to what a pitch Duke Frederick had raised the credit of his State and war-establishment. Seven years later, Guidobaldo married Elisabetta, daughter of Francesco Gonzaga, Marquis of Mantua. This union, though a happy one, was never blessed with children; and in the certainty of barrenness, the young Duke thought it prudent to adopt a nephew as heir to his dominions. He had several sisters, one of whom, Giovanna, had been married to a nephew of Sixtus IV., Giovanni della Rovere, Lord of Sinigaglia and Prefect of Rome. They had a son, Francesco Maria, who, after his adoption by Guidobaldo, spent his boyhood at Urbino.

The last years of the fifteenth century were marked by the sudden rise of Cesare Borgia to a power which threatened the liberties of Italy. Acting as General for the Church, he carried his arms against the petty tyrants of Romagna, whom he dispossessed and extirpated. His next move was upon Camerino and Urbino. He first acquired Camerino, having lulled Guidobaldo into false security by treacherous professions of good-will. Suddenly, the Duke received intelligence that the Borgia was marching on him over Cagli. This was in the middle of June 1502. It is difficult to comprehend the state of weakness in which Guidobaldo was surprised, or the panic which then seized him. He made no effort to rouse his subjects to resistance, but fled by night with his nephew through rough mountain roads, leaving his capital and palace to the marauder. Cesare Borgia took possession without striking a blow, and removed the treasures of Urbino to the Vatican. His occupation of the Duchy was not undisturbed, however; for the people rose in several places against him, proving that Guidobaldo had yielded too hastily to alarm. By this time the fugitive was safe in Mantua, whence he returned, and for a short time succeeded in establishing himself again at Urbino. But he could not hold his own against the Borgias, and in December, by a treaty, he resigned his claims and retired to Venice, where he lived upon the bounty of St. Mark. It must be said, in justice to the Duke, that his constitutional debility rendered him unfit for active operations in the field. Perhaps he could not have done better than thus to bend beneath the storm.

The sudden death of Alexander VI., and the election of a Della Rovere to the Papacy in 1503, changed Guidobaldo's prospects. Julius II. was the sworn foe of the Borgias, and the close kinsman of Urbino's

heir. It was therefore easy for the Duke to walk into his empty palace on the hill, and to reinstate himself in the domains from which he had so recently been ousted. The rest of his life was spent in the retirement of his Court, surrounded with the finest scholars and the noblest gentlemen of Italy. The ill-health which debarred him from the active pleasures and employments of his station was borne with uniform sweetness of temper and philosophy.

When he died, in 1508, his nephew, Francesco Maria della Rovere, succeeded to the Duchy, and once more made the palace of Urbino the resort of men-at-arms and captains. He was a prince of very violent temper: of its extravagance history has recorded three remarkable examples. He murdered the Cardinal of Pavia with his own hand in the streets of Ravenna; stabbed a lover of his sister to death at Urbino; and in a council of war knocked Francesco Guicciardini down with a blow of his fist. When the History of Italy came to be written, Guicciardini was probably mindful of that insult, for he painted Francesco Maria's character and conduct in dark colours. At the same time this Duke of Urbino passed for one of the first generals of the age. The greatest stain upon his memory is his behaviour in the year 1527, when, by dilatory conduct of the campaign in Lombardy, he suffered the passage of Frundsberg's army unopposed, and afterwards hesitated to relieve Rome from the horrors of the sack. He was the last Italian Condottiere of the antique type; and the vices which Machiavelli exposed in that bad system of mercenary warfare were illustrated on these occasions. During his lifetime, the conditions of Italy were so changed by Charles V.'s Imperial settlement in 1530, that the occupation of Condottiere ceased to have any meaning. Strozzi and Farnesi, who afterwards followed this profession, enlisted in the ranks of France or Spain, and won their laurels in northern Europe.

While Leo X. held the Papal Chair, the Duchy of Urbino was for a while wrested from the house of Della Rovere, and conferred upon Lorenzo de' Medici. Francesco Maria made a better fight for his heritage than Guidobaldo had done. Yet he could not successfully resist the power of Rome. The Pope was ready to spend enormous sums of money on this petty war; the Duke's purse was shorter, and the mercenary troops he was obliged to use proved worthless in the field. Spaniards, for the most part, pitted against Spaniards, they suffered the campaigns to degenerate into a guerilla warfare of pillage and reprisals. In 1517 the Duchy was formally ceded to Lorenzo. But this Medici did not live long to enjoy it, and his only child Catherine, the future Queen of France, never exercised the rights which had devolved upon her by inheritance. The shifting scene of Italy beheld Francesco Maria reinstated in Urbino after Leo's death in 1522.

This Duke married Leonora Gonzaga, a princess of the house of Mantua. Their portraits, painted by Titian, adorn the Venetian room of the Uffizi. Of their son, Guidobaldo II., little need be said. He was

twice married, first to Giulia Varano, Duchess by inheritance of Camerino; secondly, to Vittoria Farnese, daughter of the Duke of Parma. Guidobaldo spent a lifetime in petty quarrels with his subjects, whom he treated badly, attempting to draw from their pockets the wealth which his father and the Montefeltri had won in military service. He intervened at an awkward period of Italian politics. The old Italy of despots, commonwealths, and Condottieri, in which his predecessors played substantial parts, was at an end. The new Italy of Popes and Austro-Spanish dynasties had hardly settled into shape. Between these epochs, Guidobaldo II., of whom we have a dim and hazy presentation on the page of history, seems somehow to have fallen flat. As a sign of altered circumstances, he removed his Court to Pesaro, and built the great palace of the Della Roveres upon the public square. Guidobaldaccio, as he was called, died in 1574, leaving an only son, Francesco Maria II., whose life and character illustrate the new age which had begun for Italy. He was educated in Spain at the Court of Philip II., where he spent more than two years. When he returned, his Spanish haughtiness, punctilious attention to etiquette, and superstitious piety, attracted observation. The violent temper of the Della Roveres, which Francesco Maria I. displayed in acts of homicide, and which had helped to win his bad name for Guidobaldaccio, took the form of sullenness in the last Duke. The finest episode in his life was the part he played in the battle of Lepanto, under his old comrade, Don John of Austria. His father forced him to an uncongenial marriage with Lucrezia d'Este, Princess of Ferrara. She left him, and took refuge in her native city, then honoured by the presence of Tasso and Guarini. He bore her departure with philosophical composure, recording the event in his diary as something to be dryly grateful for. Left alone, the Duke abandoned himself to solitude, religious exercises, hunting, and the economy of his impoverished dominions. He became that curious creature, a man of narrow nature and mediocre capacity, who, dedicated to the cult of self, is fain to pass for saint and sage in easy circumstances. He married for the second time a lady, Livia della Rovere, who belonged to his own family, but had been born in private station. She brought him one son, the prince Federigo-Ubaldo. This youth might have sustained the ducal honours of Urbino, but for his sage-saint father's want of wisdom. The boy was a spoiled child in infancy. Inflated with Spanish vanity from the cradle, taught to regard his subjects as dependents on a despot's will, abandoned to the caprices of his own ungovernable temper, without substantial aid from the paternal piety or stoicism, he rapidly became a most intolerable princeling. His father married him, while yet a boy, to Claudia de' Medici, and virtually abdicated in his favour. Left to his own devices, Federigo chose companions from the troupes of players whom he drew from Venice. He filled his palaces with harlots, and degraded himself upon the stage in parts of mean buffoonery. The resources of the duchy were racked to support these parasites. Spanish

rules of etiquette and ceremony were outraged by their orgies. His bride brought him one daughter, Vittoria, who afterwards became the wife of Ferdinand, Grand Duke of Tuscany. Then in the midst of his low dissipation and offences against ducal dignity, he died of apoplexy at the early age of eighteen—the victim, in the severe judgment of history, of his father's selfishness and want of practical ability.

This happened in 1623. Francesco Maria was stunned by the blow. His withdrawal from the duties of sovereignty in favour of such a son, had proved a constitutional unfitness for the duties of his station. The life he loved was one of seclusion in a round of pious exercises, petty studies, peddling economies, and mechanical amusements. A powerful and grasping Pope was on the throne of Rome. Urban at this juncture pressed Francesco Maria hard; and in 1624 the last Duke of Urbino devolved his lordships to the Holy See. He survived the formal act of abdication seven years; when he died, the Pontiff added his duchy to the Papal States, which thenceforth stretched from Naples to the bounds of Venice on the Po.

III.

Duke Frederick began the palace at Urbino in 1454, when he was still only Count. The architect was Lugiano of Lauranna, a Dalmatian; and the beautiful white limestone, hard as marble, used in the construction, was brought from the Dalmatian coast. This stone, like the Istrian stone of Venetian buildings, takes and retains the chisel mark with wonderful precision. It looks as though, when fresh, it must have had the pliancy of clay; so delicately are the finest curves in scroll or foliage scooped from its substance. And yet it preserves each cusp and angle of the most elaborate pattern with the crispness and the sharpness of a crystal. When wrought by a clever craftsman, its surface has neither the waxiness of Parian, nor the brittle edge of Carrara marble; and it resists weather better than marble of the choicest quality. This may be observed in many monuments of Venice, where the stone has been long exposed to sea-air. These qualities of the Dalmatian limestone, no less than its agreeable creamy hue and smooth dull polish, adapt it to decoration in low relief. The most attractive details in the palace at Urbino are friezes carved of this material in choice designs of early Renaissance dignity and grace. One chimney-piece in the Sala degli Angeli deserves especial comment. A frieze of dancing Cupids, with gilt hair and wings, their naked bodies left white on a ground of ultramarine, is supported by broad flat pilasters. These are engraved with children holding pots of flowers; roses on one side, carnations on the other. Above the frieze another pair of angels, one at each end, hold lighted torches; and the pyramidal cap of the chimney is carved with two more, flying, and supporting the eagle of the Montefeltri on a raised medallion. Throughout the palace we notice emblems appropriate to the Houses of

Montefeltro and Della Rovere : their arms, three golden bends upon a field of azure : the Imperial eagle, granted when Montefeltro was made a feud of the Empire : the Garter of England, worn by the Dukes Federigo and Guidobaldo : the ermine of Naples : the *ventosa*, or cupping-glass, adopted for a private badge by Frederick : the golden oak-tree on an azure field of Della Rovere : the palm-tree, bent beneath a block of stone, with its accompanying motto, *Inclinata Resurgam* : the cypher, FE DX. Profile medallions of Federigo and Guidobaldo, wrought in the lowest possible relief, adorn the staircases. Round the great court-yard runs a frieze of military engines and ensigns, trophies, machines, and implements of war, alluding to Duke Frederick's profession of Condottiere. The doorways are enriched with scrolls of heavy-headed flowers, acanthus-foilage, honeysuckles, ivy-berries, birds and boys and sphinxes, in all the riot of Renaissance fancy.

This profusion of sculptured *rilievo* is nearly all that remains to show how rich the palace was in things of beauty. Castiglione, writing in the reign of Guidobaldo, says that "in the opinion of many it is the fairest to be found in Italy ; and the Duke filled it so well with all things fitting its magnificence, that it seemed less like a palace than a city. Not only did he collect articles of common use, vessels of silver, and trappings for chambers of rare cloths of gold and silk, and such like furniture ; but he added multitudes of bronze and marble statues, exquisite pictures, and instruments of music of all sorts. There was nothing but was of the finest and most excellent quality to be seen there. Moreover, he gathered together at a vast cost a large number of the best and rarest books in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew, all of which he adorned with gold and silver, esteeming them the chiefest treasure of his spacious palace." When Cesare Borgia entered Urbino as conqueror in 1502, he is said to have carried off loot to the value of 150,000 ducats, or perhaps about a quarter of a million sterling. Vespasiano, the Florentine bookseller, has left us a minute account of the formation of the famous library of MSS., which he valued at considerably over 30,000 ducats. Yet wandering now through these deserted halls, we seek in vain for furniture or tapestry or works of art. The books have been removed to Rome. The pictures are gone, no man knows whither. The plate has long been melted down. The instruments of music are broken. If frescoes adorned the corridors, they have been whitewashed ; the ladies' chambers have been stripped of their rich arras. Only here and there we find a rafted ceiling, painted in fading colours which, taken with the stonework of the chimney, and some fragments of inlaid panel-work on door or window, enables us to reconstruct the former richness of these princely rooms.

Exception must be made in favour of two apartments between the towers upon the southern façade. These were apparently the private rooms of the Duke and Duchess, and they are still approached by a great winding staircase in one of the *torricini*. Adorned in indestructible or

irremoveable materials, they retain some traces of their ancient splendour. On the first floor, opening on the vaulted *loggia*, we find a little chapel encrusted with lovely work in stucco and marble; friezes of bulls, sphinxes, sea-horses, and foliage; with a low relief of Madonna and Child in the manner of Mino da Fiesole. Close by is a small study with inscriptions to the Muses and Apollo. The cabinet connecting these two cells has a Latin legend, to say that Religion here dwells near the temple of the liberal arts :

Bina vides parvo discrimine juncta sacella,
Altera pars Musis altera sacra Deo est.

On the floor above, corresponding in position to this apartment, is a second, of even greater interest, since it was arranged by the Duke Frederick for his own retreat. The study is panelled in tarsia of beautiful design and execution. Three of the larger compartments show Faith, Hope, and Charity, figures not unworthy of a Botticelli or a Filippino Lippi. The occupations of the Duke are represented on a smaller scale by armour, *bâtons* of command, scientific instruments, lutes, viols, and books, some open and some shut. The Bible, Homer, Virgil, Seneca, Tacitus, and Cicero, are lettered, apparently to indicate his favourite authors. The Duke himself, arrayed in his state robes, occupies a fourth great panel; and the whole of this elaborate composition is harmonised by emblems, badges, and occasional devices of birds, articles of furniture, and so forth. The tarsia, or inlaid wood of different kinds and colours, is among the best in this kind of art to be found in Italy, though perhaps it hardly deserves to rank with the celebrated choir-stalls of Bergamo and Monte Oliveto. Hard by is a chapel, adorned, like the lower one, with excellent reliefs. The Loggia to which these rooms have access looks across the Apennines, and down on what was once a private garden. It is now enclosed and paved for the exercise of prisoners who are confined in one part of the desecrated palace !

A portion of the pile is devoted to more worthy purposes; for the Academy of Raphael here holds its sittings, and preserves a collection of curiosities and books illustrative of the great painter's life and works. They have recently placed in a tiny oratory, scooped by Guidobaldo II. from the thickness of the wall, a cast of Raphael's skull, which will be studied with interest and veneration. It has the fineness of modelling, combined with shapeliness of form and smallness of scale, which is said to have characterised Mozart and Shelley.

The impression left upon the mind after traversing this palace in its length and breadth, is one of weariness and disappointment. How shall we reconstruct the long-past life which filled its rooms with sound, the splendour of its pageants, the thrill of tragedies enacted here? It is not difficult to crowd its doors and vacant spaces with liveried servants, slim pages in tight hose, whose well-combed hair escapes from tiny caps upon their silken shoulders. We may even replace the tapestries of Troy which hung one hall, and build again the sideboards with their

embossed gilded plate. But are these chambers really those where Emilia Pia held debate on love with Bembo and Castiglione; where Bibbiena's witticisms and Fra Serafino's pranks raised smiles on courtly lips; where Bernardo Accolti, "the Unique," declaimed his verses to applauding crowds? Is it possible that into yonder hall, where now the lion of St. Mark looks down alone on staring desolation, strode the Borgia in all his panoply of war, a gilded glittering dragon, and from the daïs tore the Montefeltri's throne, and from the arras stripped their ensigns, replacing these with his own Bull and Valentinus Dux? Here Tasso tuned his lyre for Francesco Maria's wedding-feast, and read "Aminta" to Lucrezia d'Este. Here Guidobaldo listened to the jests and whispered scandals of the Aretine. Here Titian set his easel up to paint; here the boy Raphael, cap in hand, took signed and sealed credentials from his Duchess to the Gonfalonier of Florence. Somewhere in these huge rooms, the courtiers sat before a torch-lit stage, when Bibbiena's "Calandria" and Castiglione's "Tirsi," with their miracles of masques and mummers, whiled the night away. Somewhere, we know not where, Giuliano de' Medici made love in these bare rooms to that mysterious mother of ill-fated Cardinal Ippolito; somewhere, in some darker nook, the bastard Alessandro sprang to his strange-fortuned life of tyranny and licence, which Brutus-Lorenzino cut short with a traitor's poignard-thrust in Via Larga. How many men, illustrious for arts and letters, memorable by their virtues or their crimes, have trod these silent corridors, from the great Pope Julius down to James III., self-titled King of England, who tarried here with Clementina Sobieski through some twelve months of his ex-royal exile! The memories of all this folk, flown guests and masters of the still-abiding palace-chambers, haunt us as we hurry through. They are but filmy shadows. We cannot grasp them, localise them, people surrounding emptiness with more than withering cobweb forms.

Death takes a stronger hold on us than bygone life. Therefore, returning to the vast Throne-room, we animate it with one scene it witnessed on an April night in 1508. Duke Guidobaldo had died at Fossombrone, repeating to his friends around his bed these lines of Virgil:

Me circum limus niger et deformis arundo
 Cocyti tarda que palus inamabilis unda
 Alligat, et novies Styx interfusa coerct.

His body had been carried on the shoulders of servants through those mountain ways at night, amid the lamentations of gathering multitudes and the bayings of dogs from hill-set farms alarmed by flaring flambeaux. Now it is laid in state in the great hall. The daïs and the throne are draped in black. The arms and *bâtons* of his father hang about the doorways. His own ensigns are displayed in groups and trophies, with the banners of St. Mark, the Montefeltrian eagle, and the cross keys of St. Peter. The hall itself is vacant, save for the high-reared catafalque

of sable velvet and gold damask, surrounded with wax-candles burning steadily. Round it passes a ceaseless stream of people, coming and going, gazing at their Duke. He is attired in crimson hose and doublet of black damask. Black velvet slippers are on his feet, and his ducal cap is of black velvet. The mantle of the Garter, made of dark-blue Alexandrine velvet, hooded with crimson, lined with white silk damask, and embroidered with the badge, drapes the stiff sleeping form.

It is easier to conjure up the past of this great palace, strolling round it in free air and twilight; perhaps because the landscape and the life still moving on the city streets bring its exterior into harmony with real existence. The southern façade, with its vaulted balconies and flanking towers, takes the fancy, fascinates the eye, and lends itself as a fit stage for puppets of the musing mind. Once more imagination plants trim orange-trees in giant jars of Gubbio ware upon the pavement where the garden of the Duchess lay—the pavement paced in these bad days by convicts in grey canvas jackets—that pavement where Monsignor Bembo courted “dear dead women” with Platonic phrase, smothering the Menta of his natural man in lettuce culled from Academe and thyme of Mount Hymettus. In yonder *loggia*, lifted above the garden and the court, two lovers are in earnest converse. They lean beneath the coffered arch, against the marble of the balustrade, he fingering his dagger under the dark velvet doublet, she playing with a clove carnation, deep as her own shame. The man is Giannandrea, broad-shouldered bravo of Verona, Duke Guidobaldo’s favourite and carpet-count. The lady is Madonna Maria, daughter of Rome’s Prefect, widow of Venanzio Varano, whom the Borgia strangled. On their discourse a tale will hang of woman’s frailty and man’s boldness—Camerino’s Duchess yielding to a low-born suitor’s stalwart charms. And more will follow, when that lady’s brother, furious Francesco Maria della Rovere, shall stab the bravo in torch-litten palace rooms with twenty poignard strokes twixt waist and throat, and their Pandarus shall be sent down to his account by a varlet’s *cottellata* through the midriff. Imagination shifts the scene, and shows in that same *loggia* Rome’s warlike Pope, attended by his cardinals and all Urbino’s chivalry. The snowy beard of Julius flows down upon his breast, where jewels clasp the crimson mantle, as in Raphael’s picture. His eyes are bright with wine; for he has come to gaze on sunset from the banquet-chamber, and to watch the line of lamps which soon will leap along that palace cornice in his honour. Behind him lies Bologna humbled. The Pope returns, a conqueror, to Rome. Yet once again imagination is at work. A gaunt, bald man, close-habited in Spanish black, his spare, fine features carved in purest ivory, leans from that balcony. Gazing with hollow eyes, he tracks the swallows in their flight, and notes that winter is at hand. This is the last Duke of Urbino, Francesco Maria II., he whose young wife deserted him, who made for himself alone a hermit-pedant’s round of petty cares and niggard avarice, and mean-brained

superstition. He drew a second consort from the convent, and raised up seed unto his line by forethought, but beheld his princeling fade untimely in the bloom of boyhood. Nothing is left but solitude. To the mortmain of the Church reverts Urbino's lordship, and even now he meditates the terms of devolution. Jesuits cluster in the rooms behind, with comfort for the ducal soul, and calculations for the interests of Holy See.

A farewell to these memories of Urbino's Dukedom should be taken in the crypt of the Cathedral, where Francesco Maria II., the last Duke, buried his only son and all his temporal hopes. The place is scarcely solemn. Its dreary *barocco* emblems mar the dignity of death. A bulky *Pietà* by Gian Bologna, with Madonna's face unfinished, towers up and crowds the narrow cell. Religion has evanished from this late Renaissance art, nor has the after-glow of Guido Reni's hectic piety yet overflushed it. Chilled by the stifling humid sense of an extinct race here entombed in its last representative, we gladly emerge from the sepulchral vault into the air of day.

Filippo Visconti, with a smile on his handsome face, is waiting for us at the inn. His horses, sleek, well-fed, and rested, toss their heads impatiently. We take our seats in the carriage, open wide beneath a sparkling sky, whirl past the palace and its ghost-like recollections, and are half way on the road to Fossombrone in a cloud of dust and whirr of wheels before we think of looking back to greet Urbino. There is just time. The last decisive turning lies in front. We stand bare-headed to salute the grey mass of buildings ridged along the sky. Then the open road invites us with its varied scenery and movement. From the shadowy past we drive into the world of human things, for ever changelessly unchanged, unrestfully the same. This interchange between dead memories and present life is the delight of travel.

J. A. S.

The Literary Restoration.*

1790-1830.

THE process of transition by which the English literature of the eighteenth century passed into that of the nineteenth, is only one of many analogous processes which, commencing about a hundred years ago, and working themselves out towards the beginning of the Victorian age, make up the complete transformation of thought, manners, and customs which the English nation underwent coincidentally with the French Revolution. The transformation is singularly interesting, because it is not so remote but what men were still alive in our youth who had passed through it, and who remembered the ancient *régime* as we remember the Corn Laws. Thus we are brought into almost living contact with a state of society which would seem as strange to ourselves, could we actually awake in it, as it in turn would have seemed to the England of Elizabeth, perhaps even stranger. It is this combined nearness to, and remoteness from ourselves which lends its special interest to the period in question, whether we contemplate it in its political or religious, its social or its literary aspects. And to the lady who has undertaken to illustrate the latter, all lovers of the subject must acknowledge themselves to be deeply indebted. We propose on this occasion to glance at a few of the salient characteristics of the generation which she passes in review: at the position which it occupies in the history of English literature; and its connection with preceding and subsequent literary developments.

English modern history is marked off into three very distinct periods by the great events of the Reformation, the English Revolution, and the French Revolution. We are still living in the third, and cannot tell what it may yet have in store for us. Of the other two no doubt we still continue to feel the effects, and to work on the results; but for all that, each admits of being regarded as something complete within itself, and possessing peculiarities of its own which have not descended with its other legacies to posterity. By the great religious and literary movement of the sixteenth century the human mind was set free almost like a child from school. We might almost illustrate its liberation by the famous simile of the horse in the Iliad, the most perfect picture, perhaps, of buoyant and exulting freedom to be found in the whole compass of poetry. Then came an age of marvels, an age of discovery,

* When this article was written the writer had not seen the recently published Lectures of Professor Shairp.

of daring enterprises, of light-hearted, reckless adventure, of imagination strung to its highest pitch. The spirit of the time finds its faithful reflection in Shakspeare, whose blithesomeness is at least as remarkable as his sublimity. The first burst of joy over, we see a softer and more pensive air stealing over literature: the boyish vigour of one age passing into the gallantry, the loyalty, and the spiritual fervour of the next; the progression from Shakspeare through the Caroline poets down to Milton, is perfectly natural and logical. With Milton the procession closes. The curtain falls upon the age of imagination and rises on the age of reason. Dryden fills up the interval, occupying much the same position in relation to the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries as Byron did in relation to the eighteenth and nineteenth. The natural bent of his mind was towards the school of the future. He was the founder of the new versification which Pope brought to perfection. Circumstances made him the poet of an imaginative creed, but nature meant him rather for satire and for criticism, for moral and didactic poetry, and the very excellence of his prose is perhaps some testimony to the truth of the assertion.

However, not to spend more time upon particular individuals, we find the second of the epochs of literature starting from the English Revolution and full developed in the first quarter of the eighteenth century. Several influences were at work to mould it into the form which it assumed. The effect of all revolutions is to breed a spirit of scepticism and to damp the spirit of reverence. Where the revolution, like the French, is accompanied by a burst of political fanaticism, one kind of enthusiasm may simply take the place of another: the enthusiasm of liberty succeed to the enthusiasm of loyalty. Where this is not the case, as in the English Revolution, where the doctrine of hereditary right, the divinity that doth hedge a king, is overthrown, not by an imaginative creed more powerful than itself, but by a purely rationalistic one, the scepticism is likely to be accompanied by a mingled spirit of utilitarianism and cynicism. This is what took place in this country between 1690 and 1720. Obedience to authority was to rest on reason and on no original and underived title. Poetry "stooped to truth." Prose became familiar and easy, and busy with the ordinary concerns of life. Religion, Christianity, theology, were to make themselves useful—to enforce morality. Imagination took wings and flew away. Pope was largely endowed with it by nature, but the reaction was too much for him. Akenside wrote upon the subject only to show that he had it not. Ideas had brought much evil on the world. They were the parents of both Puritanism and Jacobitism; and the great bulk of the English people were sick of both. To this sceptical, materialistic, and utilitarian spirit of the age, therefore, which was one direct product of the Revolution, we owe the practical character of the eighteenth-century literature. To the leisure which life acquired through the settlement of all the great questions by which it had so long been agitated, we

owe its other distinctive characteristic, its form and finish, or what Pope called its correctness.* An age much harassed by spiritual and social problems is impatient of form both in religion and in literature. An age of repose has time for it. The manner of a work becomes almost as important as the matter. Appreciation of elegance does not make too severe a demand on our intellectual energies. A lower level of thought and a higher level of style than prevailed in the seventeenth century is the combination which greets us in the eighteenth; and attractive as it is at its best, it is easy to see that in its decay and its corruption it would present a rather sorry spectacle.

If, as we shall presently endeavour to show, the great feature of the transition which Mrs. Oliphant has undertaken to delineate, is the restoration of the imaginative element to its place in literature, it may be as well to state very briefly what we mean by the word; because of what is commonly called such the eighteenth-century poets have abundance. We mean by imagination the power of vividly realising conceptions which are beyond the scope of the senses. These are not necessarily supernatural, they may be historical, or they may be the offspring of pure meditation unfed from any external source. Milton's Pandemonium with

A thousand demigods on golden thrones,

Scott's reproduction of the feudal ages, Coleridge's *Christabel* and *Ancient Mariner*, Wordsworth's *Intimations of Immortality*, are all specimens of imagination of the purest kind. A highly developed power of comparison, the power of seeing resemblances between apparently dissimilar objects, which applied to one kind of subject matter we term wit, applied to others we call poetry; imagery, metaphor, felicitous epithets, vivid and impressive descriptions of scenes which we have witnessed, appeals to passions or sentiments which stir us to enthusiasm or to tears, are all generally supposed to be the work of the imagination; and we have neither time nor space to invent another word instead of it. But it is evident that between the one kind of imagination and the other there is a difference not only in degree but in kind; and we wish our readers to understand that for the purposes of this essay we use the word exclusively in its former sense.

The writer who undertakes to act as our guide through any period of history or literature, must necessarily start from some beginning. Mrs. Oliphant takes the year 1790 as the commencement of the transition period; and if we must take any one date, it is perhaps the best we can choose. But the two periods—the old and the new—run into one another so much that it is difficult to say exactly where the one begins and the other ends. On the whole, we should say it is better to take the entire period which lies between the French Revolution and

* Macaulay has gone out of his way to misrepresent what Pope meant by being "correct."

the English Reform Bill as representing the bridge which spans the gulf between the old *régime* and the new. The year 1820, Mrs. Oliphant's other limit, seems a purely arbitrary date; whereas the other, 1832, undeniably marks off a period in many respects complete within itself; and denotes the farthest point in the nineteenth century which was reached by the traditions of the eighteenth. It is convenient, however, to regard the transition period as coëval with the French Revolution, and combining in its features both the sympathy evoked by that event in its earlier stages, and the repulsion which it inspired in its later ones. The world witnessed simultaneously a great and sudden insurrection against the highly complicated and artificial forms which both governments, society, and literature had at that time assumed. Greater simplicity, "a return to nature," was everywhere the cry of the insurgents. The august and the venerable were everywhere in danger of being confounded with what was merely cumbrous and pedantic; and literature, with its brocade and its ruffles and its velvet, lost something also for a time of greater value—the respect for dignity, for manner, for the elaborate beauty and consummate art which had been matured under the old *régime*. The injury, however, was but temporary; and, had it been greater than it was, would have been more than compensated for by the new inspiration which the French Revolution brought with it. The dry bones were warm with life again. Poets again began to see visions, and to dream dreams. The eighteenth century had found its goddess in the valley, walking with plenty in the maize, or listening to the bees and the wood-pigeons; the new generation sang to her on the mountain heights, and on the silver horns; and if the wonders which she showed them came too often through the ivory gate, the delusion was at all events in some respects beautiful and generous.

Taking, therefore, the French Revolution as our starting point, we may say that the reaction or transition we are here considering proceeded mainly upon three lines—literary, speculative, and historical: it reformed our style, it stimulated self-inspection and self-interrogation, and it supplied a new field for the imagination, not only in the boundless hopes excited by the theory of human progress, but also in the seductive contrast with its more lawless and irreligious aspects presented by the better side of feudalism. The Revolution generated at one and the same time a new belief in the future, and a new belief in the past. And both struck their roots deeply into the literature of that memorable era.

To begin with the first of these changes—"the return to Nature" in the matter of literary expression—Wordsworth, in his well-known essay prefixed to the *Lyrical Ballads*, has told us with sufficient clearness what was meant by it. It is in fact, though not in name, an elaborate answer to the theory of poetic diction laid down in Johnson's *Life of Dryden*. Johnson's account of the matter can hardly be put in fewer words than his own. "Every language of a learned nation neces-

sarily divides itself into diction scholastick and popular, grave and familiar, elegant and gross ; and from a nice distinction of these different parts arises a great part of the beauty of style. But if we except a few minds, the favourites of Nature to whom their own original rectitude was in the place of rules, this delicacy of selection was little known to our authors ; our speech lay before them in a heap of confusion, and every man took for every purpose what chance might offer him.

“There was, then, before the time of Dryden no poetical diction, no system of words at once refined from the grossness of domestick use, and free from the harshness of terms appropriated to particular arts. Words too familiar, or too remote, defeat the purpose of a poet. From those sounds which we hear on small or on coarse occasions, we do not easily receive strong impressions, or delightful images ; and words to which we are nearly strangers, whenever they occur, draw that attention on themselves which they should transmit to things.”

Wordsworth may be said to have met this statement with a point-blank contradiction. His contention is that the language which men really speak, the language that is of good conversation, is the proper language for poetry ; and he draws a distinction between this language and “the vulgarity and meanness of ordinary life” which does not seem to have been in Johnson’s mind when he wrote the above passage. He seems rather to have included both kinds of language here mentioned by Wordsworth under the system of words not “refined from the grossness of domestic use.” There are, in fact, three gradations of speech to be considered in dealing with the controversy. There is the grave and dignified and eloquent prose which may be employed by a great historian, a great preacher, or a great orator ; the correct and well turned, though withal easy and familiar, prose which distinguishes the best conversation, though the present generation can hardly speak of it from experience ; and lastly, there is the language of common life, the language in which men express themselves when they ask you the news or invite you to dinner, or describe their last dispute with a cabman. Now that the first of the three was perfectly suitable to poetry Johnson could hardly have denied, for he has used it himself. But then it is certainly not the language which even the most accomplished men use in ordinary conversation ; not the language to which Wordsworth is referring as that which is suitable for poetry. The consideration of the higher kind of prose style, however, seems to point out the true conclusion. Whatever thoughts raise us out of ordinary life, and above the level of our ordinary observation, have a claim to be expressed in language appropriate to themselves, and equally removed from familiar or vulgar associations. Whether they are in prose or verse makes no difference. Now all poetry has this elevating purpose in view, whether it succeeds or not ; and therefore we agree in the main with Johnson that there is such a thing as poetic diction very properly to be distinguished from the language of conversation, however select, to use Wordsworth’s own expres-

sion, it may be. And it was in this point that English literature underwent the least change of all during the transition period. Poetic diction held its ground, purified and improved no doubt by the influence of Wordsworth, but maintaining intact its personal identity and its own independent laws. In fact, much of what Wordsworth appears to have been attacking had already been ridiculed by Johnson. When somebody asked him what he thought of a new volume, he replied that there was a good deal in it of "what was poetry once"—spangled meads, and so forth; showing that in his opinion there was a popularly accepted poetic diction which time at all events had made ridiculous.

It is under the second head which we have mentioned that we find, perhaps, the most marked distinction between the poetry of the eighteenth and the poetry of the nineteenth century. The one was exclusively objective; and though, of course, we cannot say that the other has been either exclusively or even principally subjective, it owes a very great part of its charm to the predominance of this element. This difference is very conspicuous in the treatment of Nature by the poets of the two epochs respectively. Between Thomson and Wordsworth, or Thomson and Tennyson, there is all the difference between admiration and sympathy. One can almost fancy either of the two later poets addressing the trees and the hill as the child addresses the dog, "Cannot you talk?" Thomson's descriptions of Nature are very beautiful indeed; and with the lower kind of imagination, if imagination we are to call it, he is abundantly endowed. Collins's "Ode to Evening" is superior even to Thomson; Thomson has nothing equal to the stanzas immediately preceding and following the beautiful lines—

And marks o'er all
Thy dewy fingers draw
The gradual dusky veil.

We used to be taught at school that what was called "personification" was one of the highest of poetical gifts; the personification of the seasons or of the powers of nature, the highest of them all; and so perhaps, as Johnson said of spangled meads, "it was once." One can hardly, however, allow it to be so now, though when so exquisitely done as it is in Collins it belongs to a very high quality of poetic power and affords infinite delight to the genuine lover of nature. Yet even here we miss what we find in Wordsworth, in Keats, and, above all, in our own Tennyson, that subtle sympathy with nature, the source perhaps of what Mr. Ruskin calls the "pathetic fallacy," but also of something more than he himself seems to include in that term. The imputing to nature herself the emotions which we experience or derive from the contemplation of her is the pathetic fallacy:—"The cruel, crawling foam;" the "splendid tear" of the passion-flower, and so forth. Here the poet vividly reproduces conceptions suggested to him by his own senses. But we find passages in all the three poets we have named which go beyond this; and show a power of representing in words, not directly calling attention

to them, the mysterious tones in which nature occasionally responds to our own emotions and sentiments. There is no fallacy here; not at least of the kind described by Mr. Ruskin; for nothing is *imputed* to nature; but words are chosen so happily appropriate at one and the same time to the aspect of nature and to the mood of the writer or his characters, that they suggest a far deeper sympathy between the two than the lines above quoted. It may be a *suggestio falsi*. But it is not the peculiar *suggestio falsi* which Mr. Ruskin criticises; and that it is a fallacy at all would probably have been denied stoutly by Wordsworth, who, in the lines on Tintern Abbey, seems to mean that with him the feeling was a reality, based on some mysterious affinity only to be appreciated by the poet.

Neither Byron nor Shelley have exhibited this particular poetic faculty to the same extent as Keats and Wordsworth, as they represent rather the political and social than the metaphysical influence of the Revolution.

In Keats' ode to the nightingale,

the foam
Of perilous seas in faery lands forlorn,

is one good example of it. But it is in Tennyson that we find it most frequently.

Let us take the well-known canon, namely, that the "sound should seem an echo to the sense," and see how it is exemplified by Pope and Tennyson respectively.

Soft is the sound when zephyr gently blows
And the smooth stream in smoother numbers flows;
But when loud surges lash the sounding shore,
The hoarse rough verse should like the torrent roar.
When Ajax strives some rock's vast weight to throw,
The line, too, labours, and the words move slow;
Not so when swift Camilla, &c.

Compare the above with the following lines from the *Morte d'Arthur* :

I heard the ripple washing in the reeds,
And the long water lapping on the crag.

Here we do not get merely the sound of the water, but the whole moral effect of the scene at the same time: the sense of melancholy; the feeling of loneliness, wildness and gloom, of something half akin to fear, which is characteristic of such spots, and which it is the object of the poet to awaken. Another eminent instance of it is to be found in the *May Queen* :—

When the flowers come again, mother, beneath the waning light,
You will never see me more in the long grey fields at night,
When from the dry dark world the summer airs blow cool
On the oat-grass, and the sword-grass, and the bullrush by the pool.

How admirably in harmony with the situation and with all the feelings which belong to it is the picture which the dying girl sets before

us. There is always a certain sadness in evening, but one kind of scenery brings it out more strongly than another, and the wide pasture fields looking grey by comparison with the meadows, and the lonely pool in the corner, with the long sighing grass and rushes, evoke it in its full extent. There is cheerfulness even by night about copses and cornfields which would have been fatal to the desired effect.

Mr. Ruskin objects to the use of the word "subjective" to denote the view of nature as she presents herself to the mind of the individual worshipper, taking her colour from the emotions which dominate him at the moment. But unless he will supply us with another word equally applicable to other departments of human thought as well as to poetry, we must continue to use it. Those who write or speak of objective and subjective *truth* may be told that they are wrong, because we do not know what truth is. But that there are the objective and subjective aspects of things we know from our own consciousness. We know that the alleged facts of history and religion assume a various aspect according to whether we look at them from the outside, as they greet us in printed pages, solid and substantial objects in the prospect of the past, named, classified, and defined, or whether we shut our eyes, so to speak, and look at them exclusively through the medium of our own contemplative faculties. And we know not how it can be said that the one view is more true than the other. The latter, however, is certainly the more interesting of the two; and therefore the poets of the reaction, who *mutatis mutandis*, and in comparison with the poets who preceded them, may be said to have taken that view of nature, possess a charm of their own which we look for in vain elsewhere.

This new nature-worship was a reaction in part against that worship of the "town," which was another distinguishing trait of the eighteenth century. Towards the year 1790 the idea of the town as the centre of literature and wit and civilisation, was fast wearing out. Sick of those conventional pictures of nature which a series of town-bred poets had handed down from generation to generation, like literary-heirlooms, like the "topics" supplied of old to university disputants, men of taste and feeling rushed into the opposite extreme, and in their zeal to emancipate nature elevated her to the rank of a goddess. The goddess of reason owed her existence to the same causes. The cultus had its excesses and extravagances no doubt; but when the fermentation was over it left behind it the pure juice of the grape, and of a vintage of no common order. It arose in the second place from the general dissatisfaction with all human institutions which the French Revolution bred in many minds, and an attempt to find in nature what society could no longer supply. Of this particular department of restlessness Rousseau perhaps is the great representative.

The introspective and self-conscious spirit which was another distinctive note of the transition period, was the natural result of a universal disposition to inquire, to sift, and to analyse everything that existed in

the world, which accompanied the dissolution of the ancient European system. This meets us in all the poets of the period, and requires little further commentary. The revolutionary enthusiasm in favour of freedom should, however, be compared with what may be called the rational enthusiasm as we find it in Thomson and others, who composed set panegyrics on Liberty such as was understood to have been achieved for England by the splendid aristocrats who accepted dedications, and bestowed patronage. This, however, hardly lasted down to the period with which we start, and in which Shelley became the poet of the "Religion of Humanity."

So far the transition has been all in one direction, running parallel with the bright side of the Revolution, redolent of the springtime, and looking forward to the new heavens and the new earth which the enthusiasts expected to result from it—

Another Hellas rears its mountains,
From waves serener far,
A new Peneus rolls its fountains
Against the morning star,
Heaven smiles and truths and empires gleam,
Like wrecks of a dissolving dream.

But all this time a second reaction had been gradually and silently developing itself, working as it were underground, and only coming to the surface just in time to usher in the nineteenth century. In 1802 appeared the first volume of Scott's *Border Minstrelsy*, which was followed in 1805, by the *Lay of the Last Minstrel*; and the second half of the reaction was now fairly under way. Scott's early bias in favour of romantic poetry is attributed by himself and others to Bishop Percy's *Reliques*. There is no doubt that Percy was the pioneer of the movement which in Scott's hands became such a mighty instrument for good both in life and literature. But like the speculative branch of the reaction, it was connected with more general causes. "Scott," says Mr. W. Rossetti, "is not and never can be the poet of literary readers; but it is highly possible for the critical tendency and estimation to be too exclusively literary." Now this is exactly what it had been during the whole of the eighteenth century. Elegance, which Johnson defines admirably to be "the beauty of propriety," was the one thing needful in the eyes of the literary society, which to some extent fulfilled the functions of the modern periodical press. Elegance is an excellent thing in its way, and so is logic. But you may have too much of it, and as it was said of a celebrated college at Oxford fifty years ago, that its common room "stunk of logic," so it might be said of English polite literature just a hundred years ago, that it stunk of elegance. If for elegant we substitute the word classical, and the two in this case are synonymous, we shall see at once the style from which the *Minstrelsy* was a reaction. Men were thoroughly tired of Hayley and Hoole, and

ready to welcome any great literary innovator who should offer them some fresh and more stimulating diet.

But this was not all. Alongside of that sympathy with the social aspects of the revolution which distinguished the earlier effusions of the Lake school, sprung up a strong military spirit which pervaded all classes of society. The wars of 1756 and 1778 had been regarded rather as matches between France and England, in which England indeed backed herself heavily, and had much to lose or gain; but not wars in which our existence as an independent nation was supposed to be at stake. Nothing like the general and profound excitement which agitated the whole of England during the earlier half of the great revolutionary struggle has been known since the days of the Armada. Napoleon the First was as formidable as Philip the Second. And in the highly wrought state of public feeling which then ensued the heroic romance of the middle ages supplied a general want. Men plunged into it greedily, as the jaded and thirsty traveller plunges into a running stream. Military instincts, moreover, turn naturally to the past. For it is there that the profession of arms is seen in its most attractive colours, surrounded by a halo of chivalry and knighthood, which, though they cannot bespeak a more gallant and heroic spirit than animates the soldier of to-day, possess a fascination for the public which cannot be exerted to the same extent by the circumstances of modern warfare.

The truth is, that our great struggles with Napoleon woke from their long sleep all the loftiest and most spiritual elements of the national character, and disposed men in every department of thought to look over the heads of commonplace and everyday circumstances, and seek in long-forgotten regions the intellectual and moral food for which sudden excitement made them hunger. The *Waverley* novels, the *Christian Year*, and the *Tracts for the Times* were all parts of one great movement, and cannot be severed from each other in any philosophic survey of the epoch now under consideration. It was the return of the imagination after her long banishment to take possession of her rightful inheritance. The Queen enjoyed her own again. It was Fox, we think, who used to say that Restorations were the worst Revolutions; and many people, perhaps, may think that the great feudal and Catholic revival which we owe mainly to Keble and to Scott, has been utterly mischievous and disastrous. Macaulay thought the *Waverley* novels had done infinite harm. We, however, are concerned merely with their literary history, with the causes which led up to them, and with their influence on our style and character. Of this we think there can be no doubt. The power, the purity, and the poetry of Scott's best romance; the subordination of passion to duty which they everywhere exhibit; the singular eloquence which attains all its effects, sublime, tragic, or humorous, by the same undeviating simplicity, have exercised an influence on our taste and morals which not even the modern sensational school of literature has entirely obliterated. It was impossible to have found a better anti-

doté to the more demoralising influence of Shelley and Byron than in the novels of Sir Walter Scott; and thus, curiously enough, it will be seen that the one branch of the literary reaction which ruled within the period we have before us, supplied exactly the corrective that was required for the worst tendencies of the other.

If we have said nothing as yet of the two great poets whom Mrs. Oliphant seems to consider as the joint originators of the literary revolution, Burns and Cowper, it is because we are unable to satisfy ourselves that they really were so. Cowper, in our judgment, was essentially of the eighteenth century. He is entirely objective; a religious and ascetic Thomson. There is no difference in principle between his style and his diction and that of any of his predecessors. He represents, not so much the freedom of thought, the various emancipations of which the French Revolution was both the cause and the effect, as the great religious renaissance of which Wesley was the author. Men of genius impress their own idiosyncrasies on whatever they write; and Cowper's heroics are not Pope's heroics. But then, no more are Goldsmith's. There is nothing in Cowper more unlike Pope than Goldsmith's description of the village clergyman; and Cowper resembles Goldsmith more than Goldsmith resembles Pope. Nothing can be more unlike than the tone, the *ἦθος*, of the three men respectively. But we can detect in Cowper no symptoms of the new birth, of the subjective, brooding, speculative, semi-sceptic spirit, of the roving and lawless spirit, of the romantic and feudal spirit, which constitute the principal characteristics of the revolutionary epoch. Nor do we see in his style any premonition of the new canons which Wordsworth was shortly to put forward. Cowper was a man of the most exquisite taste and refinement—a perfect English gentleman, as some of his predecessors were not. There is a peculiar grace and delicacy and sweetness, so to speak, in every line he wrote, whether in verse or prose; but no rebellion, conscious or unconscious, against the theory of composition which he found in the ascendant when he entered the world of letters.

Of Burns, perhaps, one could not say quite so much; yet even in Burns we see little signs of anything but a determination to go his own way. Of any suspicion that the dominant literary school stood in need of radical reform he seems wholly innocent. Wordsworth and his party went deliberately to work, as deliberately as any political or ecclesiastical reformers ever did, to overthrow what they believed to be falsehood and superstition and, in a measure, tyranny. There can be no doubt at all of their position. But Burns is a more complex study. His poetry is so closely intertwined with the lore of his native land that it is difficult to say how much of it sprung from a purely national inspiration, and how much from those more general causes which are the proper subject of this article. Burns, we are told, did for the songs of Scotland what Scott did for the ballads: yet we can hardly attribute the literary excavations which Scott carried on among the Border valleys to any impatience of

the literary form which reigned supreme in the metropolis. His motives in the first instance were antiquarian and patriotic, rather than literary; and we should be disposed to say the same, and to say it more exclusively, of Burns. But if Burns was not one of the conscious authors and founders of the new system, he must be placed very high among its representatives. In him we see what we do not see in Cowper—the highest play of imagination. He belongs to the “Restoration” in virtue of this test quality. With that crusade against poetic diction which was the early work of Wordsworth, we cannot see that he had anything in common. But he was one of the first, if not the very first, to feel the breath of the returning deity as she descended once more—

Mille trahens varios adverso sole colores,

and his song rose up to meet her like the skylark’s.

Byron, again, was a poet who was rather a child of the reaction than a parent. He would never have created the change if he had not found it in existence. His sympathies were with the old school. We all know what he thought of Pope; but, like Sir Bedivere in *King Arthur*, “his own thoughts drove him like a goad.” Society, as he supposed, had injured him; and he made use of the materials so abundantly supplied by an age of revolution to retaliate on society. He will always be a grand figure in the literary group who stand in the portals of the nineteenth century. He took up the romantic vein of poetry which Scott had opened, and struck out a higher flight of imagination than even the author of the *Lay* had then reached. But he wants the singlemindedness of either Wordsworth or Shelley, and has left fewer marks behind him on our poetry than either Keats or Scott.

The danger of the transition period lay, no doubt, in its disdain of form. But this was happily surmounted. Leigh Hunt and Keats were sinners in this respect, and in his early days Mr. Tennyson showed the same weakness: but he very soon outgrew it, and now to find his equal as a literary artist we must go back to Gray. We find, in fact, in the Laureate a combination of the virtues of both systems: the elegance and finish of the Twickenham school, with the deeper insight, higher aspirations, and more subtle sympathies of the Lake school of poetry.

As the faculty of imagination enters less into prose composition than it does into verse, we have naturally less to say of the former than we have of the latter in dealing with the revival of it. At the same time, as Wordsworth points out, the proper antithesis of prose is not poetry, but verse; and as far as prose is imaginative, it partakes of the nature of poetry, and comes within the scope of our inquiry. The *Waverley* novels are of course the illustration *par excellence* of our meaning; and we have already said all that is necessary of their rise and their influence. But before them in order of time, and close to them in order of merit, stand the writings of Burke, whose imagination was kindled into fury by the French Revolution and the havoc which it wrought

among all his favourite idols. Macaulay, perhaps, was the first to see what was to be gained by the use of the imagination in history; but though we cannot exclude him from the list of imaginative writers who owe their fame to the Renaissance, yet it cannot be said that he has reached the same level as either Carlyle or Mr. Froude, while in imaginative prose not employed on history, De Quincey, and perhaps Mr. Ruskin, are above them all. There are parts of the *English Opium Eater*, of the *Flight of the Calmuck Tartars*, and of the *Traditions of the Rabbis*, which are not to be distinguished from poetry of the highest order. Mr. Carlyle's deathbed of Louis XV., if compared with Macaulay's Charles II., will show the incontestable superiority of the former.

The transition period, however, shows no revolt against the prose diction of the eighteenth century as it does against its poetic diction. Macaulay jeers at Johnson, yet his own style is based on Johnson; and the review of Robert Montgomery and the critique of Gray's poetry might have been written by either. Of other departments of prose literature much the same may be said. Miss Austen, incomparable as she is, differs in no essential respect from Miss Burney; the prose of Hallam is the prose of Blackstone; and what is perhaps better worth mentioning, is that Wordsworth's prose entirely corresponds with these remarks. In his preface to the *Lyrical Ballads* we see as much "elegance," as much attention to the forms and ceremonies of style as we should find in any earlier writer. The truth is that in prose composition the eighteenth century was at home, was on its own ground, and, doing what it thoroughly understood, did it thoroughly well. Consequently, its prose style survived the ordeal of the Revolution while its metrical style did not. We can hardly bestow greater praise on a prose writer of the present day than to say that he writes like Junius; and what thoroughly accomplished man of letters, if asked which he thought the greater compliment, to be called equal in style to Lord Macaulay or equal in style to Gibbon, would hesitate to choose the latter?

To sum up, the leading and distinctive characteristic of the period which may fairly be said to begin with the death of Dr. Johnson and end with the death of Walter Scott, was the restoration of the imaginative element to both literature and religion. Banished by the English Revolution, she was restored to us, *qua minime serio*, by the French, and produced two classes of worshippers, those whose enthusiasm led them forward to the glories of the future, and those whom it led in a contrary direction towards the romance and beauty of the past. The eighteenth-century men had few or none of these feelings. As George Eliot puts it, with great truth and humour, "They cared not for inquiring into the cause of things, being satisfied with the things themselves." From this pleasant but inglorious repose they were awakened by a thunder-clap, which transformed in a moment all previously existing conceptions of life and work, and gave us the galaxy

of great writers and thinkers who adorn the epoch—Burns, Wordsworth, and Coleridge, Shelley, Byron, and Keats, Edmund Burke, and Walter Scott. The long peace, the political changes which occurred in 1832, the rise of the economic age—the age of Birmingham and Manchester—which did, after an interval, succeed to the heroic age—the age of Trafalgar and Waterloo—the progress of ideas favourable to a social revolution which, whatever its countervailing advantages, must necessarily rob life of much of its picturesqueness, of many of its richest colours, and of some, perhaps, of its noblest motives: have worked a change in England during the last fifty years which might have been expected to materialise literature and bring it down to a lower ebb than it had reached a hundred years ago. Such, however, has not been the case. Imagination has held her own against all the rival forces in the field. The strength of the great reaction, some features of which we have here endeavoured to recall, has not yet spent itself. George Eliot, writing forty years afterwards, is the natural exponent, in fiction, of one branch of it, as Scott was of the other. Froude, Carlyle, and Tennyson have maintained the protest—the protest of Wordsworth, of Burke, and of Scott—the protest which it is the privilege of literature, and should be its chief glory, to hand down—against utilitarianism, optimism, and epicureanism. This is matter for pride, and perhaps also it is ground for hope.

Moslem Pirates in the Mediterranean.

ACROSS the blue waters of the Mediterranean Sea two irreconcilable enemies, Moslem and Christian, have glared at each other for centuries: to the north Spain, France, Italy; to the south, Morocco, Algiers, Tunis, Tripoli. The waves that wash those shores have many a time been dyed with the blood of the valiant and the helpless, the strong soldier and the trembling child. They have been the liquid battle-plain for belted knight and turbaned Turk during many troubled years, and along the coasts of Italy from Villafranca to Sicily there are few miles of territory which have not at one time or another been scorched and ravaged by African fire and sword.

There are no pages of European history more full of wild romance and stirring adventure than those which record the deeds of the Moslem pirates in the Mediterranean; and of all these pages those which embrace the period from 1500 to 1560 are by far the most important and interesting. Not that a fierce maritime warfare between the Turks and Christians did not exist long before; but during this period piracy on the part of the former took a more powerful development, by reason of the protection afforded to these lawless marauders by the Sultans of Turkey, who invested sundry of them with important dignities, and even with sovereignty. Within those sixty years the Ottoman emperors made use of the pirate chiefs to forward their own ambitious aims in Northern Africa, and to drive out the native Arab dynasties. But they proved to be implements which as often cut the hand that wielded them as those against whom they were directed.

Perhaps not the least singular circumstance connected with the piratical wars of the Mediterranean is the fact that their latest and ablest historian is a Roman Dominican monk. Padre Alberto Guglielmotti, of the Order of Preachers, is the author of a series of valuable works all dealing with marine matters, and especially and peculiarly with the Papal navy. Perhaps to the general reader the very phrase "Papal navy" may appear almost incongruous. Yet a Papal navy once existed, and its captains and sailors were amongst the most valiant and skilful of all those who manned and navigated the fleets of the Mediterranean. Still more incongruous does it appear to think of a cowed friar in his cell inditing treatises and narratives about naval doings, which not only manifest the most complete mastery of technical details, but have as breezy a salt savour of the sea in them as Dibdin's songs! The phenomenon is partly accounted for when we learn that Padre Guglielmotti is a native of Civit  Vecchia, and that his boyish reminis-

cences include listening with eager delight to the yarns of an old sailor who was wont to sit on the quay on holiday afternoons and recount his adventures. But Padre Guglielmotti's natural bent and aptitude for maritime things have been cultivated by assiduous and intelligent study. On navigation, gunnery, and fortification, on marine topography and meteorology (especially as regards the phenomena to be observed in the Mediterranean), this Dominican monk speaks with science and authority. One is tempted to exclaim, "What a fine sailor wasted!" But it must be remembered that for thousands of stout fellows able to take part in doughty deeds afloat, all the seaports in Italy could perhaps not furnish one other able to chronicle them as the Padre Alberto has done for us. He brings to the performance of his task some valuable elements which are supplied by the learned leisure of a cloistered life; and a mass of very varied erudition is fused, so to speak, into homogeneity by the glow of a strong and steady enthusiasm.

The leading incidents of the piratical warfare waged by the Mussulmen against the Christians in the Mediterranean are to be met with scattered throughout the pages of many chroniclers and historians. Jacopo Bosio in his well-known history of the Order of St. John of Jerusalem,*—known later as the Knight of Malta—records many of them; as does Agostino Giustiniani in his *Annals of Genoa*, Pietro Bembo in his *Rerum Venetarum Historia*, Guerrazzi in his *Life of Andrea Doria* (the latter, despite its power and eloquence, not always to be relied on in detail), and many others. But Padre Guglielmotti has for the first time collected and co-ordinated these scattered records into a historic whole, and has added to them much valuable original thought, and many hitherto inedited documents, the fruit of his diligent researches. The work we are now alluding to is entitled *La Guerra dei Pirati, e la Marina Pontificia, dal 1500 al 1560*. It is rare to meet with a book so interesting at once in matter and manner. The author's character and tone of mind might furnish as valuable a study to the psychologist as his facts afford to the historian. He is endowed with a freshness and vigour of imagination which enables him to realise to his own mind the events he chronicles, almost as forcibly as if he had witnessed them. One result of this power is that he writes of distant incidents with a lively personal interest, which the majority of mankind are unable to feel even for the passing life around them. Three hundred and fifty years have not fossilized the men of the Cinque Cento for Padre Guglielmotti. He loves and hates them with a heartiness worthy of Doctor Johnson. As a counterpoise, he has a genuine love of truth, and would not willingly misrepresent even a Barbary pirate! But his manifestations of impartiality are such as an honest man might display towards his neighbour and contemporary in the flesh; and they neither have, nor affect to have,

* *Storia della sacra religione et illustrissima milizia di San Giovanni Gerosolimitano*. In fol. Roma, 1594—1602.

any Jove-like air of serene tolerance, or scientific imperturbability. For him humanity is still warm and palpitating in parchment chronicles of three centuries ago.

The year 1500 of our era was the Jubilee year. Rome was full of pilgrims from all parts of Europe. Her hostelries were overflowing; the ports of her maritime territory were populous with foreign vessels; the sea in those days was a more frequented highway than the land; and the concourse of travellers arriving from the different coasts and islands of the Mediterranean accumulated a mass of testimony as to the vexations, injuries, and alarms inflicted on their respective countries by the Mussulmen pirates. At the same time, the traditions of the ancient crusades against the infidel were revived and warmed by all the religious exercises, the public preachings, and the visits to famous sanctuaries, which belonged to the Jubilee year. The Borgia Pope, Alexander VI., who then sat on the throne of St. Peter's, proposed an alliance of Christian princes and peoples against the Turk. Almost every European nation had vital cause to desire the overthrow of the Mussulman power. The shores of France and Spain were constantly exposed to piratical ravages. Venice waged a fierce war in the waters of the Levant to defend her possessions. Even the inland countries of Hungary and Poland were engaged in a struggle against the hordes of Bajazet. Italy, from Genoa to Reggio on the Mediterranean, and from Venice to Taranto on the Adriatic, had suffered by the fire and sword of the barbarians. The most sanguine hopes were excited in the public mind by the announcement that the sovereigns of France and Spain (at that date Louis XII., and Ferdinand V., surnamed the Catholic) were about to put out all their strength against the common foe. Matters went so far in the councils of Rome, that the Pope nominated as Captain-General of the Christian armies Pierre d'Aubusson, Grand Master of Rhodes; and the Papal master of the ceremonies composed the formula of prayers to be recited on the distribution of the crosses, and the blessing of the common standard of the league.

At the same time active preparations went on to provide the contingent of twenty galleys which the Pope had promised as his contribution to the Mediterranean fleet. The captain of the Papal navy at this time was Lodovico del Mosca, of a noble Roman family, now extinct. For a long period it had been customary for the Papal Government to keep a squadron of war galleys cruising along the coast of the Roman and Tuscan Maremma, and a considerable way to the south towards Naples, for the protection of Italian commerce against the pirates. The number of these vessels was, in 1500, increased from three to twelve; namely, three galleys, three brigantines, three low coasting barges, two galleons, and a vessel called *balniere* or *baloniere*, which was a long rowing boat, something like the canoes used by the natives in Siam. Thanks to the seamanship and vigilance of Captain del Mosca, and his colleague, Lorenzo Mutino (also a Roman), the great mass of pilgrims who came by sea

reached Rome without accident or spoliation ; and there was abundance of provisions in the ports of the State and the hostelries of the city. During the whole time of the Jubilee, Mosca's little squadron was incessantly cruising along the coast from Cape Argentaro to the Circæan Promontory, and amongst the little islands off the Tuscan and Neapolitan shores. The name of Mosca was a word of fear to the pirates, who prudently kept out of his way, and left the seas free to peaceable folks bent on piety or profit. Besides fulfilling these, his normal duties, Lodovico del Mosca busied himself in preparations for the great allied campaign against the Turk, which was then in prospect. Under his supervision six new galleys were at once put on the stocks in Cività Vecchia. Moreover, he was quick and vigilant enough to make an excellent bargain for his sovereign the Pope by buying, at a very low price, all the artillery which King Frederick of Naples, then flying from his kingdom, had collected at Ischia. It is said to have been worth fifty thousand ducats, and was purchased for thirteen thousand !

The two captains, Mosca and Mutino, shipped the guns and munitions at Ischia, and brought them up the Tiber to the Ripa, whence they were conveyed by land through the Campo di Fiori to the Castle of St. Angelo. The procession greatly excited the public interest and curiosity, and the line of march was crowded with spectators. "There were thirty-six great bombards, with eighty carts pertaining to them ; some drawn by horses, some by buffaloes, harnessed singly, or two, four, and even six together ; two waggons laden with arquebusses for ship's boats ; nine with about forty smaller bombards (*bombardelle*) placed three, four, or six on each wagon ; twelve with ordinary pieces of artillery ; as many more for the service of twelve big guns ; thirty-seven carts with iron balls ; three with gunpowder ; and, finally, five laden with nitre, darts, and bullets. Splendid artillery of excellent workmanship and great power, escorted by 2,000 men under arms, without mentioning the companies who marched before and after each wagon." Thus Padre Guglielmotti. He points out that, according to this irrefragable evidence, the ancient bombards were still highly valued at the beginning of the sixteenth century, and that this was about their latest period. Thenceforward, cannon bored in proportion to the weight of the balls came into use. And whilst on the subject of mediæval artillery, we may mention a curious etymology maintained by our author. In a previous work he mentions the first example of the use of the word *mitraille*—in Italian *metraglia*—to express a quantity of projectiles fired off together, in the year 1453. Guerrazzi writes it in Italian with an *i*, and it is precisely this orthography which has blinded him to the true etymology of the word. In his *Life of Andrea Doria* Guerrazzi writes : "Cartouches filled with ball received the name of *mitraglia*, the etymology of which word is unknown to us." Had he written *metraglia* he would more easily have perceived the derivation of the word from the Italian verb *mettere*, to send, to emit. Of course its ancestor a little further removed

is the Latin *mittere*. But, as Padre Guglielmotti well observes, the desinence in *aglia* is not Latin, but belongs to the idiosyncrasy of the Italian language, which has other examples of it; as *pedonaglia*, foot-soldiery, *nuvolaglia*, a mass of clouds, expressing the agglomeration of a number of similar objects.

With all these preparations, and others on a great scale made by Louis XII., King of France and Seigneur of Genoa, and by Ferdinand the Catholic King of Spain, mighty results were expected from the Christian alliance against the Turk. The French king had prepared a fine fleet and army under the command of Count Philip of Cleves Ravenstein; whilst the troops of his Most Catholic majesty were led by the famous Gonsalvo of Cordova, surnamed the Great Captain. But these Christian princes were more intent on their own aggrandizement than on effectually protecting their peaceable subjects from piracy and rapine. Both looked with greedy eyes on Naples; and both used the war against the Turks as a pretext for collecting sea and land forces, and taking Frederick of Naples by surprise. In fact, Count Philip of Cleves Ravenstein, without taking counsel either with the Venetians, or with the Grand Master of Rhodes, entered the Archipelago, making a mere pretence of waging war on the Ottoman Government. He assaulted Mitylene, bombarded it without effect, put about to the westward, and lost on the voyage the flagship on which he himself was, and soon afterwards another of his biggest ships with nearly all her crew. Similarly the army of the Spanish king, under the command of Gonsalvo, having united itself with the Venetians off Cephalonia, disembarked, and made a great show of besieging the chief fortress of the island; but always half-heartedly, and in readiness to weigh anchor and make off at a moment's notice, according to the secret instructions of the Spanish Court. The flight of King Frederick from Naples, and the quarrel between France and Spain as to the division of the spoil, are well known, and form no part of our present subject, except in so far as they offer irrefragable proof of the real ends covered by the pretext of war against the Turks and the pirates. Even Cæsar Borgia used the same pretence to cloak for a moment his ambitious aims in Tuscany. He gave out that he was about to collect forces, by land and sea, against the Moslems; and he was the more readily believed because all the littoral populations knew by bitter experience how needful such an enterprise was. But, instead of succouring the dwellers on the Maremman coast, Cæsar Borgia, Duke of Valentino, and Commander-in-Chief of the Papal armies, used both men and ships to despoil the Lord of Piombino of his territories, including the island of Elba. In June, 1501, the squadron under the command of Mosca was summoned from Cività Vecchia to blockade Piombino; and in the following August, Giacopo d'Appiano, Lord of Piombino, fled to France, and the garrison surrendered to Borgia.

And, meanwhile, what were the foes to whose tender mercies the commerce, the property, the liberties, and the lives of inoffensive popu-

lations were left almost defenceless? It has been stated that the special characteristic of the period from A.D. 1500 to 1560 was the elevation of pirate chiefs by the Porte to positions of great power and dignity. They were made rulers over Tunis, Tripoli, Tangiers, Alexandria, and over the larger islands from the Ionian Sea to Jerba; and were, moreover, appointed admirals, or commanders of squadrons, of the Ottoman Empire. These men were almost without exception the most truculent ruffians imaginable, recruited from the scum of the galleys. Some of them were renegades, and all were treacherous and rapacious, to the injury of Moslem as well as Christian, when it suited their purpose. The names by which many of them were known in the Mediterranean, and whose very sound struck the inhabitants of its smiling shores with panic terror, are curious and suggestive. Among them were *Barbarossa*, or Redbeard; *Il Giudeo*, the Jew; *Scirocco*, Southeaster (a stormy wind in those waters, the *creber procellis Africus* of Virgil); *Il Moro*, the Moor; *Cacciadiavoli*, Hunt-the-devils, &c. Except when these names describe personal qualities or peculiarities—as in the case of *Il Giudeo* and *Barbarossa*—they were corruptions of Moslem appellations. Thus *Camalì* was the Italian version of Kamâl-raïs; *Curtogalì* was Kurd-ogly; the terrible title of Cacciadiavoli was, thinks De Hammer, partly corrupted from Cassim or Quâsim; *Oruccio* was Oürudje; *Ariadeno* (Barbarossa) a transformation of Kair-ed-Din; *Dragut* was Torghûd; *Luccialì*, Uluge-Aly, &c.

That these desperadoes should for more than half a century have infested the waters and desolated the shores of the Mediterranean, Adriatic, and Ionian seas, is only to be explained by the discords and jealousies which divided Christian princes and rulers. France and Spain played off the Turk against one another in their struggle for supremacy in the peninsula. Meanwhile ruin and misery befel the littoral populations, and thousands of Christian men, women, and children languished in cruel captivity. Their "Most Christian" and "Most Catholic" Majesties were, indirectly, purveyors of slaves to the Sublime Porte and to all the petty tyrants of Northern Africa. A brief notice of the *facta et gesta* of some of the leading pirates will be the best means, compatible with the space at our command, of illustrating what an intolerable scourge Moslem piracy had become in the sixteenth century.

Kamâl-raïs, called by the Italians Camalì, in the year 1502, ruled over Santamaura or Leucadia, one of the most important of the Ionian Islands, and from that centre, with a powerful fleet, devastated the neighbouring shores, and crippled maritime commerce. At the beginning of the sixteenth century, the metropolis of the island (to which it gives its name, Santa Maura) was a strongly fortified place. It was surrounded by a strong wall, flanked by massive turrets, furnished with a large quantity of artillery, and strengthened besides by a rectangular castle of oblong shape, protected by five large round towers, and four

smaller square ones. At the foot of the escarpments were deep moats filled with sea-water. Between the island and the coast of Acarnania there is only a very narrow canal, over which, by means of sundry little islets and rocks, a bridge was carried, connecting it with the mainland. A curious memorial of the condition of the fortress of Santamaura in those days exists in the church of the Frari at Venice, where, on the monument to Benedetto Capello, a view of it is sculptured in bas-relief. In the same church, too, the commandant of the Papal fleet who directed the expedition against Camali, which we are about to describe, lives again on the canvas of Titian. The commandant, or Commissary, as was his official title, was no other than Giacompo Pesaro, Bishop of Pafo; and he is represented in Titian's magnificent picture as kneeling before St. Peter, who regards him benevolently for his services to Christendom against the Turks. The custom of employing ecclesiastics in military enterprises was not peculiar to the Papal Court. As late as the days of Louis XIV., Bishops and Cardinals commanded French ships of war.

Bishop Pesaro, then, having joined his forces with those of the Venetian Republic, proceeded to the Ionian Sea for the purpose of attacking Camali. The General of the Venetian forces was Benedetto Pesaro, the Bishop's brother. It was desired to surround the island of Santamaura by the combined fleets; but this being impossible by reason of the bridge already described, the two commanders agreed that the Roman vessels should hold the channel between the island and the mainland, cutting off all communication on that side, and that the Venetians should invest the place from the side of the open sea as far as the port of Demata. On August 23, 1502, the Roman Commissary, with twelve galleys, favoured by a south wind, glided in rapidly between the island and mainland, until they came to the shallow water at the extremity of the narrow canal. Here twelve pirate galleys awaited them, hoping either to take them by surprise, or at least to conquer them singly as they issued into the narrow channel. But the Romans, prudent as well as valorous, came on cautiously, taking frequent soundings, and keeping close together in a double line. As soon as they came in sight of the enemy, they pushed forward with such vigour of oars and such a furious fire from their big guns, that the Turkish galleys fled precipitately towards the shore; the pirates, throwing themselves into the water, escaped by swimming or wading; and their twelve ships were abandoned as a prey to the victors. On the other side the Venetians came up and landed their infantry and several pieces of artillery of large calibre; whilst the Romans, who had also landed after securing the pirate galleys, attacked the castle and cut the water conduits. The garrison, consisting of 400 Spahis, 100 Janissaries, and 2,000 natives, nearly all pirates, made a desperate resistance. On the mainland, on the side of the Epirus, appeared 1,000 cavalry soldiers with a handful of infantry, sent to the assistance of the garrison by the Turkish.

governor. But no sooner did they show themselves at the head of the bridge across the canal, than they were assailed by such a tremendous fire of grape-shot from the Roman ships as compelled them to make off precipitately, and they were seen no more. This circumstance discouraged the garrison, and after a seven days' siege, and the making of an important breach in the fortress, they came out to the gate to discuss the terms of capitulation. The place could no longer be defended, and must be yielded up; but they demanded to go out with their lives and property. The Venetian general was willing to give fair terms to the regular soldiery of the fortress; but considering the pirates to be outside the pale of honourable warfare, he desired they should be left to be dealt with at his discretion. The pirates, being almost as furious against the regular Turkish soldiers as against the enemy, began to make a tumult, and threatened to proceed to violent excesses; whereupon, exasperated by their insolence, the Christian soldiery rushed past the gate and took the place by storm. A number of Christian prisoners—natives of Puglia, Sicily, and Calabria—found within it were released from their chains, and the leading pirates were hanged by the neck from the battlements; amongst them was Kamál-raïs, called by the Italians Camali. "So much for the first!" says Padre Guglielmotti.

But poetical justice of this striking sort by no means overtook all the Moslem Corsairs. Curtogali (Kurd-ogly), for example, met with a different fate.

In 1516 there reigned over the country called by the Romans Byzacena (part of Tunis) from Algiers to the confines of Tripoli, Abu-Abd-Allah-Mohammed, of the dynasty of the Hafsit, a Moslem of Berber race, and entirely independent of the Ottoman Empire. This prince was on friendly terms with the Genoese. He had signed treaties of friendship and commerce with them, and favoured their trade, their coral-fisheries, their storehouses, because they brought important revenues to his exchequer, and helped to supply his markets to the great satisfaction of the native population. Things being thus, Curtogali, with a piratical squadron, appears on Abdallah's coasts, and demands hospitality. Now Curtogali was a notorious pirate; but he was also, none the less for that, in favour with the Sultan of Turkey, by whom he was subsequently advanced to high honours. Abdallah received him very willingly for several reasons: because he was a Mussulman, because he was welcomed by the populace, and because, according to the precepts of the Koran, the pirate delivered up to him, as ruler of the country, a clear fifth part of the spoil wrested from Christian vessels. Curtogali was soon established at Biserta (the ancient Hippo-Zarythus, called by the Arabs Benzert) almost as an independent prince, with thirty ships and a horde of nearly six thousand robbers at his command. Benzert is situated on a promontory of the Tunisian coast just opposite the mouth of the Tyrrhene Sea. From this point Curtogali could strike with his right hand at Trapani in Sicily, with his left at Cagliari in Sardinia,

and swoop straight forward upon the Tiber, Rome, Naples, Tuscany, and Liguria. Within three months he had already seized upon a Genoese guard-ship, devastated a part of the Ligurian coast, taken eighteen Sicilian vessels laden with corn, and threatened the Tuscan Maremma with an ever-increasing swarm of galleys manned by the most formidable and desperate corsairs. Pope Leo X. issued stringent orders to the governors of all the Papal provinces to raise troops, occupy roads and bridges, patrol the shore, keep up a constant correspondence by day and night between the points most open to attack, and, in short, take the most active measures for the defence of the country against their dreaded foes. Dreaded in the fullest sense of the word they were. The mere menace of their coming sufficed to keep whole provinces in agitation. The city of Rome itself was alarmed; prayers were put up in all the churches, and the Pontiff with his court, and a large body of secular and regular clergy carrying the most sacred relics, went on foot in public processions from church to church to implore the divine protection against the pirates.

Meanwhile, however, Abdallah, ruler of Tunis, continued to harbour and favour Curtogali. Padre Guglielmotti has an amusing description of Abdallah's conduct and state of mind. "He desired," says our author, "peace with all, and prosperity for his own interests. Friendly to the merchants with their commerce, friendly to the pirates with their spoils. Let all hold firmly by the law: the former contentedly paying the custom dues, the latter cheerfully handing over a fifth part of their robberies, and Abdallah, their common friend, would ever continue in peace with them all. Outside of his ports the merchants and the pirates might fall together by the ears if they would; that was no reason for him to trouble his head. On the contrary, he would joyfully await them on their return either with custom dues, or tribute of the fifth, as the case might be." A delightful programme; only that the Genoese, with whom, as has been said, Abdallah had made solemn treaties, did not wholly appreciate this lofty impartiality to the detriment of their commerce. They consequently resolved to assail Curtogali under cover of the Papal banner, and so as not openly to manifest hostility against the ruler of Tunis. Their ships, together with those of the Pope and a strong contingent belonging to the Knights of St. John, attacked Biserta on August 4, 1516, set free a number of Christian prisoners, and gained a rich booty from the pirate ships, which were found laid up in the port, the crews having taken themselves off at the approach of the allied fleet. Thence the latter cruised along the African coast as far as Jerba; and having burnt many of the enemies' vessels, taken a large share of spoil, and captured three brigantines, they returned triumphantly at the end of the month to the Italian harbours.

The result of these exploits was that Abdallah, perceiving that his policy of "each of you for yourselves, and all of you for me," was no longer tenable, made fresh treaties with the Genoese, promising to favour

their commerce, and to protect their merchant vessels against all and sundry, along the coasts of Tunis. And so Genoa gained some advantage from her spirited effort. Not so Rome. Curtogali, finding that Abdallah's interests were seriously involved in keeping faith with the Genoese, relinquished all present hope of attacking their vessels from Tunisian ports. But all the more ferociously did he direct his projects of vengeance against Rome. To this end he conceived a plan of singular audacity, and one which, if carried out, might strangely have changed several pages of European history. This plan was nothing less than to kidnap the Pope, and carry him off prisoner! And it was, moreover, within an ace of succeeding. Here is Padre Guglielmotti's account of the matter, founded on contemporary documents:—

“Pope Leo, son of Lorenzo the Magnificent, and still a young man, was accustomed every autumn to leave Rome with a few familiar friends and followers, and to put aside grave thoughts, and give rest to his weary mind, by the pleasures of hunting and fishing, which he pursued throughout the country and on the shore. One of his favourite resorts for this purpose was the Castle of the Magliana, five miles distant from Rome on the banks of the Tiber. It is now a squalid and deserted ruin. . . . But in the days of Pope Leo it was a sumptuous edifice, as I have seen for myself in the designs of Sangallo, and as all may read in the documents of that time. . . . From thence the Pope was wont to ride out privately to Porto, Ostia, Ardea, or Laurento, to descend to the shore, and embark in a little fishing boat, and to divert himself, now at sea with net or hook, now on land with hound and hawk. In this year (1516) he left Rome on the eighteenth of September, and remained out of it two months, visiting the cities of the Maremma and hawking and fishing in various places.” (Roscoe in his *Life of Leo X.* falls into some inaccuracies respecting this excursion. In the first place he says that the Pope, after hearing of the death of his brother, Giuliano de' Medici, at Florence, “retired to Cività Lavinia,” as though seeking privacy in his grief; and secondly he asserts that the Pope left Rome “a few days after he had received intelligence of this event,” which occurred in March. Now we have the irrefragable testimony of Paris de Grassis in his diary that the Pope left Rome on September 18.) Padre Guglielmotti goes on: “Leo proceeded to Palo, and along the shores near the mouth of the Tiber, and to the suburban cities, as far as the Laurentian coast below Cività Lavinia. At this latter place Curtogali lay in ambush awaiting him, with eighteen ships, and his men partly on board, and partly ashore, to catch the Pope between them. By good fortune some one got scent of the plot, and the whole company drew bridle in time, turned about, and fled at full gallop to Rome, which they reached in safety on October 28. Paris de Grassis, who knew all, although he was not of the hunting-party, says no explicit word of this adventure. He merely writes of hunting, fishing, and a sudden return to the city. This was then a cowardly and vile plot. Such it is proved

to be by the testimony of sundry historians, and by the conspiracy discovered six months later." *

There seems to be no doubt that Curtogali had a secret understanding with some traitor or traitors in the Papal Court. Nor is this at all inconceivable to those who know how, as Padre Guglielmotti says, the most ardent passions, the fiercest struggles between France and Spain, independence and servitude, nobles and populace, Sienna and Florence, and many more, all were focussed, so to speak, around the "fatal house of Medici." Curtogali, disappointed in his enterprise of kidnapping the Pope, vented his fury on the surrounding country.

Six years later we find this pirate chief commanding a division of the Turkish fleet which was sent against Rhodes, then the seat and stronghold of the Knights of Jerusalem. Guglielmotti's account of that famous siege—although necessarily much compressed—is very interesting. But we have not space to do more than allude to it here. Our present business is with Curtogali. On December 20, 1522, the place capitulated, on the 24th the Turks made a triumphal entry into Rhodes. The Sultan Soliman rode a magnificent courser, and was surrounded by a brilliant staff with all imaginable "pride, pomp, and circumstance." But the Moslem sovereign was not insensible to the sorrowful position of his vanquished adversaries. As he rode on to take possession of the fortress which the Grand Master, Prince Philippe Villiers l'Île Adam, had so long ruled over and so valiantly defended, Soliman said in a low voice to those nearest to him, "It weighs upon me somewhat that I should be coming hither to-day to chase this aged Christian warrior from his house." The two great antagonists desired to see each other. They met, Philip surrounded by his knights, and Soliman by a guard of Janissaries. The old Christian and the young Turkish warrior were so struck and impressed by each other's aspect, and doubtless by the rush of thoughts which their meeting under such circumstances gave rise to, that for a few moments they remained silent, gazing at each other without uttering a word. The first to break this singular and impressive pause was our acquaintance Curtogali, and thereupon ensued the usual speeches, and compliments, and ceremonies between the Turkish and Christian leaders. But although cloaked with some chivalric courtesy, the defeat of the knights was none the less hard and bitter to endure. At the commencement of the following year, they left the island, never to return. The last to embark was the old Prince Philippe Villiers. He was closely followed by his herald, who, at a sign from the Grand Master, raised his trumpet to his mouth and blew the strain familiar to the knights called "Salute and Farewell." That very same trumpet of the last adieu is still preserved in the museum at Malta, mute for

* The conspiracy of Cardinal Petrucci and others of the Roman Curia to poison Leo, and for which Petrucci and some subordinate instruments of his attempted crime suffered death.

evermore. Of Curtogali we here take leave. Our last view of him is as Prince or Governor of Rhodes, triumphant over his Christian enemies, and high in power among his Moslem countrymen.

The story of *Il Giudeo*, the Jew, contains some touches of humanity rare in these bloody chronicles, and the end of it is strangely pathetic. This man was, as his name implies, a Jewish renegade. He was born at Smyrna, and acquired great riches by his piracies. The Arabs called him Sinàm, the Turks Ciefut Pasha, and the Italians *Il Giudeo*. After the conquest of Rhodes, the pirates infested the Mediterranean like a pack of hungry wolves; and *Il Giudeo* surpassed them all in astuteness and in an intimate knowledge of every creek and hiding-place along the coasts and among the islands. Monte Argentaro, Elba, Ponza, he knew them all, and could play at hide-and-seek among them with his swift, treacherous galleys. He had a fleet of thirty-four of them, and ravaged the coasts of Sicily, Naples, and the Roman States. For the most part he was successful and almost unmolested in his marauding expeditions. But once three ships belonging to the Knights of Rhodes, and commanded by Captain Paolo Vettori, made a raid upon the robbers and captured some pirate galleys off Gianutri, a tiny islet of the Tuscan Archipelago. But this was a comparatively unimportant check to *Il Giudeo*. None the less for it did he scour the Mediterranean to his own great profit and the terror of the littoral populations. In 1533 we find him triumphantly carrying off from near Messina three vessels belonging to Andrea Doria, laden with silk—a very rich prize. In 1535 he defended *La Goletta* with a body of 6,000 picked Turkish troops against the Christian armies commanded by Charles V. in person. The Moslems made a valorous defence, but were overpowered and compelled to fly to Tunis, where Barbarossa was then reigning, having forcibly seized that kingdom from the descendant of the ancient Berber dynasty of the Hafsìt. Within the city of Tunis at that time were upwards of 10,000 Christian slaves taken by the pirates. These were Spaniards, French, Germans, and, more numerous than all, Italians; people of both sexes and all ages and conditions, merchants, soldiers, knights, sailors, priests. These unfortunates, on the first approach of the Christian army, had been huddled into some underground caverns called the *Gune*, originally intended for storing grain. Barbarossa, seeing the fortune of war go against him, absolutely proposed to massacre all these helpless wretches, and was with difficulty dissuaded from his atrocious intention. *Il Giudeo* chiefly opposed it, and it was mainly owing to his intercession that the prisoners' lives were saved. This of *La Goletta* was a great and important victory for the Christian arms. Besides putting the enemy to flight and confusion, the Christians captured all the Moslem ships, without losing one on their side. Amongst the prisoners taken was *Il Giudeo's* favourite child, a boy of ten years old, who is stated to have been serving as a sort of cabin-boy on board one of the captured Moorish vessels. The child fell to the share of the Prince of Piombino, who

caused him to be baptized, had him educated in all the accomplishments of a gentleman of that day, and brought him up in his own house, "where he lived honoured and beloved by all."

Meanwhile Il Giudeo was advanced to even greater honours by the Sultan. Escaped from the disaster of La Goletta and of Tunis, he was nominated Admiral of the Fleet of the Red Sea; the principal scope of which was to harass and oppose the Portuguese, whose progress in the Indies was giving umbrage to Soliman. Il Giudeo's head-quarters were at Suez. He was enormously wealthy, powerful, and honoured. But the terrible pirate had a heart. It is evident that his apostasy had not cancelled the strong parental affection so characteristic of his race, and of the teachings of the Hebrew religion; and he never ceased to lament the loss of his son. Nearly ten years after the disaster of Tunis, Barbarossa—another celebrated and especially truculent Moslem pirate—attacked the island of Elba, which was a possession of the Prince of Piombino. Barbarossa threatened to ravage the island with fire and sword, if Il Giudeo's son were not given up to him. This act appears to have been dictated less by friendship for his comrade in piracy than by greed of gain. There is little doubt that he expected the prince to pay a heavy ransom for the youth to whom he had become attached. Only a short time previous, the Republic of Genova had been compelled to the humiliation of buying him off from destroying Savona. However, the young man at once declared himself willing to go and see his father, as was right and dutiful, but stipulated spontaneously that the dominions of his benefactor, the Prince of Piombino, should be respected. Accordingly the baptized son of Il Giudeo set out for Egypt where his father anxiously awaited him. But when one day he appeared before him, a handsome, elegant cavalier, richly attired, and surrounded by a train of servants and attendants, the old man embraced his long-lost son in such a paroxysm and transport of joy, that "his heart burst and he fell dead." The circumstance is well attested by Bosio, Mambrino, Jovius, &c. And, as Padre Guglielmotti remarks, Il Giudeo was probably the only one of the dreaded company of Moorish pirates to whom it could possibly have happened.

Barbarossa's adventures were perhaps more varied and startling than those of any of his compeers, or at least more of them have been chronicled and particularized. But he was also superior to the majority of his compeers in intelligence as well as daring. The son of a renegade Greek of Mitylene, he and his brother Oürudge early embarked in the career of piracy, beginning in great poverty—so much so that their first attempts were made in a wretched little cockle-shell of a boat, armed at the expense of some speculator (perhaps we should now say "contractor") in that line of business; they speedily amassed riches, and made themselves feared and famous. Kair-ed-Din, corrupted by the Italian *cinquacentisti* into Ariadeno, and nicknamed from the colour of his hair Barbarossa, was the leading spirit of the two. He was of middle

height and herculean strength, with a red and very thick beard. His lower lip hung down and made him lisp in his speech. He was proud, vindictive, and treacherous. Nevertheless, he could on occasion assume considerable affability of manner, and his smile is said to have been peculiarly sweet. He spoke several languages with fluency, and Spanish by preference. At once courageous and cautious, he had a penetrating eye for the choice of his subordinates, amongst whom were numbered at various times such ornaments of the piratical profession as Cacciadiavoli, Il Giudeo, Hassan Aga (a Sardinian renegade), &c. He made a careful and fruitful study of the naval constructions of his time, and greatly improved the build and armament of the corsair vessels, making them lighter and fleetier than heretofore; for, as he was accustomed to remark to his lieutenants, a greyhound is better for the chase than a mastiff. In short, he was evidently no vulgar desperado, intent on petty plunder, but a leader of men, endowed with keen perceptions, cool daring, and Napoleonic unscrupulousness. It does not appear, however, that he made any pretence of carrying Mussulman "civilization" into Christian countries. He simply robbed and ravaged because he wanted booty and slaves. But the world has progressed since A.D. 1530, or so. We have seen that the Republic of *Genova la Superba* was induced to buy him off on one occasion. He plundered Calabria, Campania, and Nice; and in 1536 (*regnante* Pope Paul III. Farnese) he caused such a panic along the whole of the Italian Mediterranean coast, that the Pontiff made a journey in person to hasten the armaments and defences of the Maremma, to visit the citadels, to comfort the people, and to encourage the troops and their leaders. In twenty-seven days he visited Nepi, Viterbo, Montefiascone, Orvieto, Gradoli, Capodimonte, Acquapendente, Toscana, Corneto, Civit  Vecchia, and Cere. And then he turned his attention to the walls of Rome. Guglielmotti maintains that the modern fortifications of Rome and the works of Sangallo and Castriotto, in the part of the city called the Borgo, and at the Vatican, had their origin in the necessity for being prepared against the Turks, and especially against the terrible Barbarossa. One of Barbarossa's exploits was to disembark in the Island of Procida, in the Gulf of Naples, and from thence to burn, harry, and ravage the mainland in all directions. He bombarded Ga ta, he destroyed Sperlonga, he seized Fondi, a town in the present province of Caserta in the kingdom of Naples. And at this latter place he nearly succeeded in a pet plan of his, which was to carry off Giulia Gonzaga, widow of Vespasian Colonna, and reputed the most beautiful woman in Italy, and make a present of her to Sultan Soliman! The lady had the narrowest escape possible, being one of the first persons in the town to be aroused from sleep by the approach of the pirates, and hurrying away half-dressed. The town was sacked, and later the pirates burned Terracina, and finally they appeared on the Roman shores at the mouth of the Tiber. Such was the terror of the populations that contemporary writers are almost unanimously of opinion that Barbarossa might

have captured Rome itself had he made the attempt. This, however, was not in his schemes. Having taken in stores of fresh water, and wood from the neighbouring forests, he made off straight for Tunis. Here Muley-Hassan, the legitimate sovereign, was very far from suspecting what awaited him. But Barbarossa, with perfect frankness and absence of any diplomatic fashions whatsoever, turned the Tunisian monarch out of his dominions, and installed himself as ruler instead ! After twelve years more of a brilliant and prosperous career, this remarkable personage died in his bed at Constantinople, and was buried (July 1546) on the shores of the Bosphorus at Therapia. To this day the ruins of his tomb are to be seen there, picturesquely overgrown with moss and ivy.

The above are only a few brief pages from the varied chronicles of Mediterranean piracy, which are curiously and intimately connected with the history of European politics throughout the sixteenth century. And in our own times the geographical position of that famous Barbary coast has again made it important in the councils of Europe. Nay, to go further back by many centuries, the Italians of to-day discover that Cato's warning about Carthage is not yet obsolete ; and that the fresh figs from Tunis are more quickly transported to their coasts by steam navies nowadays than they could be carried in the Roman galleys a hundred and fifty years before Christ.

Moors and Forests of the North.

It is an obvious remark to make that the forests and moors and rivers of Scotland yield a larger revenue to their owners at the present day than they have ever done before. The woods, with which centuries ago the hills were covered, were of little benefit to the rude people of the country; they supplied fuel and sheltered beasts of chase, and that was all. After the decay of these forests the bare mountains were almost valueless for many generations. A few cattle were pastured in the more fertile straths, and the game required for food was easily got on their outskirts, but the thousands of square miles of wild country which these glens intersected were little visited. Then about the end of last century sheep were introduced into the north; of late years they have in many places been removed to make room for deer, and 2,000*l.*, 5,000*l.*, and even 10,000*l.* a year is paid to the fortunate owners of what we call "forest," though it may be land quite destitute of trees. It is the same with the water; rivers which not so very long ago could be fished by anyone almost without permission are now let in small stretches at 50*l.* or 100*l.* a month. At the present time there is a feeling in Scotland, more or less strong, that all ground devoted exclusively to deer is wasted; but we have no intention in this paper of touching on this vexed question, interesting though it is, and we shall have nothing to say here about evictions, or the rights and wrongs of foresting land. Our object is to give a short account of the difference which exists between life in the wild hill country as it is now and as it was two or three generations back, looking at the question from a sportsman's point of view, and to venture on a prophecy as to what its condition will be in the course of the next hundred years.

In the young days of Christopher North, and Charles St. John, and William Scrope there lay a life open to a keen sportsman of moderate means which is barely possible now even to a very rich man. After a night spent in discussing all things under the sun with Tickler and Hogg—wisdom and supper and politics and literature, and whisky and poetry all mixed up together in one magnificent hodge-podge—the Professor used to sally forth in the wonderful garb in which he is represented in his *Recreations*. Whether the tent was pitched by Loch Etive or "Sweet Dalmally," or in the wilds of Perthshire, made little difference; he went where he pleased, and no man let him. St. John was not rich, and it is only a quarter of a century since he died, but he enjoyed, at any rate in the earlier part of his life, a privilege which no money could buy now—the right of going pretty much where he wished with his gun or rifle or

fishing-rod. If a man's purse be sufficiently deep he may rent forest and moor and water, and slay the inhabitants thereof in immense numbers. He may kill more stags in one season than fifty years ago most stalkers would have got in ten, and count his grouse by thousands instead of hundreds of brace; all this, too, in a couple of months, between the middle of August and the first week in October. But to do it he must have great wealth, and be prepared to pay for his few weeks' sport something like the official income of a prime minister or of an archbishop; and he must keep within his own bounds. St. John could not of course do this; he could not kill hecatombs of deer and grouse, and probably would not have cared about it even if he had had the opportunity. But he could wander away from his home in Moray a two, or three, or four days' journey into the wilderness, and trouble his mind little about boundary stones and marches. If he wished to kill a particular stag few considerations for such obstacles need have prevented him. He could freely travel all day in almost any direction, spending the nights perhaps in a cave, or, if he was fortunate, at some shepherd's house; now and then the bothy of a smuggler would give him shelter. There, as he sat over his supper of trout or suspicious mutton, his host would tell him of the game there was in the neighbourhood—how the grouse were strong and plentiful in Glen Cassely or Strath Vaich, how he had started the big stag by the "Misty Lochan," or seen him feeding in the evening in the corrie of the "Hollow of the Yellow Moon." Sometimes he himself would come across great footprints showing fresh and recent in the damp black soil, and the unusual length of the slot, or perhaps some peculiarity in the shape, would tell him that the deer he was in search of had lately passed that way. Now all this is changed, and though deer-stalking is a wild sport still, it is less wild and more artificial than at that time. The strange limits known as "marches" must be respected—boundaries bewildering and incomprehensible to the mind of an English keeper, used to substantial paling, or wall, or dyke. Here it is the sky line as seen from the road; here you must wade into the middle of the river, and the sky line as seen from there is the march; here it is the watershed, and again chance stones lying irregularly to each other and widely separated, constitute the only tangible points in a line which must not be crossed. Sometimes these stones could be shifted, and were shifted. The curse which is supposed to attach itself to those who interfere with their neighbour's landmark must weigh heavily on many an old Highlander's soul. The marches of estates of course existed in the time we have been speaking of and long, long before; as a rule they are of very great antiquity. But the boundaries of shootings on the same property are modern.

Deer were then far less numerous than they are now. More men made poaching a regular profession; keepers were few and very far between; hand feeding, common now, in hard winters was quite unknown. Scropé, who had exceptional opportunities for procuring information, especially in Athol, gives a list of the number of deer in some

of the Northern forests, and, though approximate only, it probably conveys a fair idea of the then state of things, and it shows how lightly the ground was stocked. But the stags, though fewer, were better. Fine heads go every autumn to M'Leay's and Snowie's, but the best of them do not come up to some of those which may be seen in the old houses and castles of the North. It is difficult to believe that these queer, badly stuffed heads were ever tossed in alarm on a breezy hill, with their short necks, and straight sticking-out ears, and frightful glaring eyes. But in breadth of beam and wildness and roughness of horn they are superior to their posterity. We except, of course, those stags which are brought from Windsor or Savernake for the purpose of improving the breed, which, when they grow old—sometimes indeed before they grow old—are shot as specimens of Highland deer. Gordon Cumming relates how the old Duke of Gordon felt he had nothing left to live for after killing the stag with seventeen points. Who gets a legitimate Scotch stag with seventeen points now ?

It is easy enough to account for the present inferiority. Then a deer had a chance of reaching a patriarchal old age. He might get knocked over by a huge bullet fired from an old flint musket, but the odds were in his favour. Meat was wanted and not horns, and probably a fat yeld hind was more acceptable to the stalker than a leaner beast with good antlers. Now such an one has, as it were, a price set upon him. His whereabouts and his goings, his departure from one forest and his entry into another are all known, and he must be possessed of very great wiliness if his days in this world are long. By a mysterious, and in that wild country somewhat incomprehensible, system of telegraphy, his presence here or there is noted as surely as the arrival of a great leader of fashion at Cannes or Biarritz ; he forms a topic of conversation on Sundays to the few keepers and shepherds who have come down to the kirk from their respective glens ; a gillie crossing the hills to visit a friend, or on the more serious business of courting, mentions how he was missed during the week in such and such a corrie, and when a well-known stag is killed the news is spread over a wide district in an incredibly short space of time. The infinitely more deadly rifle of modern days, the tiny expanding bullet of the express, weigh heavily against him. Deer are watched much more carefully now, owing to the greatly increased number of keepers, and every means is taken to get the utmost amount of sport for oneself, and give as little as possible to one's neighbours. In a certain forest in the North there is a glen in which an immense number of stags stay during the greater part of the year, 400, 500, even 600 being there together at once. They are watched as a shepherd watches his sheep, almost as a woman her children, and the greatest care is taken not to disturb the mass. Stags straying away are followed, but no attempt is ever made on the main body of the herd, and the day, much longed for by the dwellers in the district, when it shall be dispersed, and its fragments scattered like a shell's over the hills,

never comes. We are far from saying that the owners of such advantages are wrong ; probably most of us in their place would do the same.

When the district which a man could travel over was practically unlimited, the difficulties of stalking were much increased. Good keepers of course know their own forests intimately. But even on familiar ground none but those who have tried it know how very hard it is to come out at the right place above the deer, when he is lost sight of, as often happens, during the greater part of a long stalk ; and what care and forethought and study, what a long, patient apprenticeship is required to work with success against the wind, the deer-stalker's greatest friend and most formidable enemy. And perhaps none but a deer-stalker knows what wind can do—its strange shifts and changes, its directly contrary motion at the same time, in the same glen, and often in the same corrie. In those days a man might be constantly changing his ground. St. John might be shooting within a few weeks at Rosehall, or in Assynt, or among the Inverness-shire hills, and it was of course impossible for him to gain that minute knowledge of the immense district he wandered over which keepers or their master (if the latter is a sportsman) can have even of a very large forest. No doubt the shepherds at whose houses he sometimes spent the night gave him what help they could, and very valuable it would be, especially then, when a shepherd was sometimes a bit of a poacher. But he had often to do what men rarely do nowadays—to find and stalk his deer on ground on which neither he nor his attendant (if he had one) had ever been before ; to visit far-lying glens, guided by direction only, a very difficult matter to accomplish, as anyone who has tried it knows.

The power of travelling easily and unconcernedly through this kind of country is an instinct ; it comes naturally to some people, and many can never acquire it. You shoot a stag, you gralloch him, or rather watch that nice operation performed by more skilful hands, you tie a bit of paper to one of his horns, and put some heather on his bonny brown side to scare away the ravens and the foxes, and then you go away and leave him. Perhaps he is lying in the furthest off corner of the forest, away by the most distant marsh. But though you go away wistfully, and feel, as you tramp the long miles back to the lodge, and see the hills which, when you started, were far in front of you gradually become left as far behind, that you have lost him for ever, there is no cause for alarm. For every glen and stream and hill, every rock and corrie, often every big stone, has its name, even in this unpeopled region, sometimes harsh-sounding, and sometimes most musical alike in the Gaelic and the English ; and, guided by half a dozen words from the keeper, a gillie and his pony will go by the shortest and best way to where the stag is lying.

There is a danger in this kind of solitary shooting which is always present, though the thought of it seldom troubles the mind. A man may utterly lose his way in mist : we have known hill men of great experience completely at fault in a thick mist, and that on their own

ground and not far from their homes. When it is very dense, and does not lift to enable landmarks to be seen even for a moment, and when what little wind there may be is constantly shifting, and changing its quarter every few minutes, even the best man may be at a loss for a time. But, at the worst, a bad mist would only mean an uncomfortable night out of doors. Snow is a much more formidable enemy, though to the shepherd rather than the sportsman. But there is a danger always present to the latter, even on the finest and clearest summer day. The slip of a foot, the twisting or spraining of an ankle, which in the low country would only cause so much pain and inconvenience, up here would mean very much more. A false step whilst eagerly running over broken ground, steep and stony, and full of treacherous heather-covered holes, might in a moment make a strong man as helpless as a child; and if he was on one of the higher tops, or in some remote, rarely visited valley, and the shots which he would fire were unheard or misunderstood, he would die of starvation. And if the worst happened—if the victim was a poacher, or a man not known in the district, or a solitary sportsman for some reason not missed, and the long lines of crows and ravens hastening to the spot were unnoticed—there are places in all forests lonely enough to hide his bones for many a long day. Such an accident rarely indeed happens; snow, or a fall over some rock, accounts for the few violent deaths which occur amongst the hills. Success carried out to its fulness by one's own unaided efforts is always sweetest: the salmon gaffed by the fisherman, the deer successfully stalked by the shooter himself, seem fairer than other salmon and deer; and so when, in some unknown, nameless corrie, after long pursuit, Mr. St. John knocked over his stag, he deserved far more credit than would be due now to the slayer of ten times the number in a well-stocked forest.

Once good fishing was within the reach of a poor man; it can hardly be said to be so now. And the fact may be noticed that, as rod fishings have become more valuable, so has the number of the fish decreased—the number, that is, of those who reach the upper waters. It is a well-authenticated fact that the Sluie Pool, on the Findhorn, once gave 1,300 salmon as the result of one night's netting—a quantity, as Mr. Francis Francis says, probably greater than the supply of the whole river now during the season; and there are men yet living who can remember when fresh and kippered salmon formed a large part of the food of poor crofters in wild districts. The rents got now for good stretches of water are enormous. We have known one rod pay 100*l.* for a month for a part of a river, and get absolutely nothing for it, another killing six fish for the same sum. 5*l.* a week on Loch Tay is cheap in comparison with this.

Many causes contribute to this scarcity of salmon for the angler. So far as pollution is concerned the Northern rivers are as they have ever been; no mills, or chemical works, or collieries pour their foulness into the Beauly, or the Naver, or the Laxford, or the Shin, and it is the net fishing in the tidal waters which is chiefly responsible for the decrease in

the number of fish which gain the upper waters. Instead of being let to small tacksmen at a nominal sum, or being worked by the proprietors in a careless and unscientific way, these are now in the hands of men who pay huge rents for them and spare no expense in plant or men. We never go to these stations without wondering how it is that any fish at all get up some rivers during six days of the week, and indeed, except during heavy floods, few do get up. Look at the Kyle of Sutherland, and consider the risks which have to be run by a salmon who meditates an expedition up the Oykel to Kinloch Alsh. He has, we will suppose, missed the numerous traps which have been set for him along the coast. At the "shots" below Bonar Bridge the nets are never out of the water, day or night, from Monday morning till late on Saturday: as one is being hauled up the treacherous meshes of another are unfolding themselves a little way above. If our fish runs the gauntlet of this pair safely, he is only at the beginning of his troubles. There is another "shot" a few hundred yards above the little town, another near the viaduct of Invershin, another at the mouth of the river Shin, sometimes another at the head of the tidal water, sometimes yet another above this last, near Rosehall. And then the hungry angler is waiting for him. Truly if there be such a thing as an insurance office in the North Sea there must be a heavy premium paid by those fish which belong to the Cassely or the Oykel! The only time for a free passage is on Sunday, and if the river is out of condition then, and the tides not suitable for bringing up the fish (and to the anxious watcher far above this seems generally to be the case), by far the greater bulk of the strong run of salmon which have been waiting their opportunity in the Kyle are captured during the week, and are flying, cold and stiff, in their icy coffins to London when they should have been leaping and plunging, rejoicing the hearts of all who saw them, far up in the higher pools.

But rod-fishing has also suffered in other ways. Till comparatively recently the moors were left pretty much as they have been for hundreds of years; it was only at the end of last century that sheep-farming was introduced into the North. Indeed, in 1792 the people made a determined attempt to drive the whole of the sheep stock of Ross-shire and Sutherland over the Inverness-shire March, and were only prevented by the military, under Sir Hector Munro, of Foulis. Then for a long time no attempt was made to improve the pastures. But of late years a great deal has been done to get the surplus water away: rivulets have been cleared out, and hundreds of miles of open sheep drains cut. The consequence is that this water all comes down at once. The rain which used to run and trickle through the moors and mosses, and afford a safe and pleasant carriage upwards to the "silver-scaled seafarers" of Mr. Morris, or act as caviare and olives on the jaded appetites of fat old trout, now runs off in a few hours—an ugly, comparatively useless mass. It is necessary to be on the spot, and catch the water at the right moment, so quickly do the rivers rise and fall. We have driven on a June

evening up the long length of a Sutherland stream, and looked with despair at its clearness and "smallness," at its motionless pools and shallows, so fine that out of the hundreds of fish which had been waiting for weeks to go up not one dare try them. We have seen it coming down the next morning in a flood so angry that, from its source far up in the mountains down to the sea, there was no place where the strongest man could pass, and so thick with the washings of the hills that one might as well throw in a boot as a fly; and in the evening, twenty miles up, we have met and captured bright, fresh-run grilse. Often a burn which can be crossed in the morning almost dry-shod will a few hours later be rattling down big stones as if they were apples—utterly impassable to a single man, and only to be waded by two or three firmly laced together. Such spates as these are much commoner now, and the spawning beds are more liable to destruction and injury. Draining is a great evil to the salmon-fisher; indeed, it may be said that whatever is of benefit to the sheep-farmer works against the interests of the sportsman.

It was a fair country to live in, the hill country of the North, in old days; it is a bonnie country still. It may be doubted whether it will be so desirable a place of residence in the course of another hundred years. Will land be still under deer, and grouse, and sheep then, or will it be entirely given up to the farmer? Perhaps none of these things will happen. There can be no practical doubt that all the lower and available land will in the course of time come under the plough. Moor, or bog, or marsh, or sand, whatever it may be, it will have to do more for our children than ever it has done for their fathers. The Duke of Sutherland has shown on his Northern property what can be accomplished in this way by money and skilled men's brains. What would an old Highlander dead a hundred years think, if he could see, as we once saw, thirteen great steam engines at work at the same time on the shores of Loch Shin? The Brahan Seer lost a grand chance of immortalising himself when he failed to foresee the doings of the future at Lairg and Kildonan. Whether these works pay the Duke or not, they cannot fail to be of enormous value to his descendants—a splendid memorial to his name. It is surely a great good to bring people into the country; here and there it still seems the object of other folk to drive them out.

The draining, the road-making, the building, and the cultivation have been done; what is wanted now is an improved climate, and there is little doubt that that can be given too. Oats and turnips cannot be sown on a hillside which lies at an inclination of 45° ; but such ground can be planted. Those who have been in Switzerland know how the fir grows on slopes on which even a good climber would not dare to trust himself without a rope; how a cranny in an almost perpendicular rock will be filled by a fine tree, which must often have to explore most carefully with its roots before it can find passages which will admit them and give them the little soil they require. With the exception of the stony parts of the higher hills, and some of the deepest bogs, we believe

there is little ground which could not be planted, and which will not be planted in the course of a few generations. There can be no doubt that planting on a large scale would be of immense benefit to such a country as Scotland—in all wet climates it is of great benefit—and it would add very largely to the value of the arable land below.

In the old days, as everyone knows, the Scotch hills were densely wooded : on most moors the remains of trees are to be found by digging a foot or two. But, indeed, it is not necessary to take this trouble : every peat bog, moss hole, and burn-side has its store of wood lying exposed, and in the lower depths of every common peat digging lie sturdy large-limbed fir, and birch, with its delicate silver bark so fresh that it is difficult to realise the enormous time that has certainly passed since the sap ran up behind it. There are fine remnants of old forests to be seen still here and there ; those in Athol, and Rannoch, and Rothie Murchus are examples. Far up on many a hillside, too, are grand solitary firs still standing, often bleached and twisted for want of shelter, and yet often seemingly little affected by the storms they have to bow to, or rather creak and groan under ; for a Scotch fir bows little, he would rather break.

Different causes contributed to the decay of these great forests, but we have no reasons for thinking that a change in the climate was one of them. In the course of centuries the ground grew “stale.” The accumulated deposits of leaves and pine needles, and fallen trees, which rotted slowly away, never being removed, formed a soft upper soil which, in a damp country like the north and west of Scotland, grew gradually unsuited to the growth of timber ; for there was no drainage to counteract its effects, and then the wind worked terrible havoc. Let anyone note the destruction caused by a heavy storm on wood planted on a dry hillside and on wet, undrained ground, and he will see how great this must have been. In the former case trees will be down, no doubt, and broken as well, but they will not be lying low literally by the acre, as in the moist plantations. And great tracts of country were devastated by fire. The Highland Railway Co. has been for some time planting a thin belt of wood on each side of the line, not for the value of the timber, but as a protection against snow. And if a thin strip of trees will grow on the wild exposed moorlands which lie between Lairg and the Caithness March, who can doubt that forests would do well where the trees would protect one another, not for a dozen or score of yards, but for as many miles ?

So we may say that as wood has grown before it will again, and that the fallow which the ground has had of a few score or a few hundred years, as the case may be, should be a grand preparation for another crop ; also that planting on a large scale, planting thousands and thousands and hundreds of thousands of acres, would do much to drain the atmosphere of its over-abundant moisture, and enable the corn crops in the valleys to be reaped in due season—not only reaped, but gathered. We have seen

a fine crop of wheat falling on an inch of snow instead of on its own crisp stubble, whilst the binders had to blow their aching fingers as if it was January instead of only well on in October. And whilst this planting would be a public benefit, an immense boon to the whole country, we cannot imagine a better investment for the money of a rich man. Who can sum up the revenue from wood which the holder of the Seafield estates fifty years hence will reap from work done by the earl who has lately died? Who can measure the capital sum which will then be represented by those woods in Strathspey? Lord Seafield planted scores of millions of trees, large English properties could be put inside his plantations. Others are doing the same, though not to the same extent. The Duke of Sutherland is planting at Shinness, for the better sheltering of his new farms there. There are landowners in Ross-shire getting large sums yearly from woods which they themselves put in when no longer young men. Many are planting, but not regularly and systematically and as a matter of course, as we think it will one day be done. The woods of the North, when compared with the heather, are as the proverbial drop in a bucket. We have stood in the middle of Ross-shire with the sea on both sides full in view, and a scanty fringe of green on the east was all that could be seen.

Whether would it pay best, to hold sheep or to plant, to grow mutton and wool or to grow wood? The improvement in the climate which extensive planting would produce should properly be considered here, but even without this we fancy there can be no doubt as to the answer. To plant largely means that a man must have the command of large capital, and this is the reason why so little has been hitherto done, for the old Highland proprietors had as a rule no money to spend on anything which would not bring them in immediate interest. There must be a great outlay at first, a heavy loss for some time, a loss for a long time. The draining (though on a great deal of ground little of this would be required), the fencing (though this again in some places would be unnecessary), and the labour would cost a great deal of money, and to this would have to be added the loss of the sheep rent, and to a certain extent, and after a certain number of years, the loss of a game rent. Much money would have to be sunk, and much spent for some time with no visible return. But each season the moors would become more and more spotted with green, and after a while—no joyful sight this, or thought either—the grouse would cease to love the rank heather, and be driven to desert the ground which had been their home for so long. The plantations would begin to pay for their thinnings; each year these would be worth more; the trees will grow whilst you are sleeping; and though storms, and snow, and disease must do harm, and bad markets cause anxiety, it cannot be to such an extent as where live stock is concerned. If a father, in the course of a certain number of years after the birth of a son, were to plant ten or twelve thousand acres of hill, the latter, long before he should perforce cease to take an interest in his property, or be

unable to enjoy it, even long before he became an old man, would reap from the woods a yearly income far greater than any sheep or deer rent could ever be, even taking into consideration the first losses and allowing a fair interest for his capital during the earlier unproductive years.

We cannot enter into elaborate figures here ; and, indeed, the object of this paper is rather to give the general sketch of an idea than to go closely into detail. The rent of sheep ground varies from 3*d.* up to 3*s.* an acre. Hill farms are not let by the acre, however, like arable. There is always a great deal of land absolutely worthless. In Devonshire a man calculates how many sheep can be fed on an acre ; here sometimes the question would be how many hundred acres would feed one sheep. You cannot well have a sheep rent *and* a clear rent. At least that is the opinion of the modern sportsman. If you *do* have both, both are of course proportionably less. In most forests there is no sheep rent. It is impossible to fix definitely the value per acre of forest, for it varies, and it depends not always on the goodness of its pastures, or the extent of its marches, but on its situation with regard to other ground. For a forest may be well watered and well sheltered, with fine corries and rich valleys, and yet not be good for deer—at least for stags. No one knows why this is so—why there should be what are sometimes called “stag forests” and “hind forests ;” why, when everything seems equal, one range of hills should hold hundreds of stags always, and another range close to and seemingly equally favoured should be without them for the greater part of the year. But it is so, and a value is put upon a forest not by the quality of its pastures or its extent, but by the number of stags which can be taken out of it in a season. 50*l.* a stag is the sum generally fixed. There may be 20,000 acres in it, or there may be 50,000, and yet the rent be the same. It must be remembered that now and then forests are thrown upon their owners’ hands for perhaps several years, and that the actual value of their produce then—the deer that might be killed—is nothing, or next to nothing, little more than a small saving in the butcher’s bill. Yet, as a rule, proprietors do not lose by preferring deer to sheep, for, except in rare cases, it would not pay sheep farmers to give the rents. This is shown by the fact that the combined rents of a grazing and a grouse moor, or of a grazing which is also under deer, seldom come up to the single one of the same ground when it is put under forest. . It generally pays to forest ground.

Supposing the hills planted, the shooting rent would not be altogether lost. The grouse would go ; they could not live in the woods ; they would be found here and there where the heather was not too rank, on high stony ground where trees refused to grow, and after reaching a certain elevation of course they would not grow. But they—the grouse—would be sadly diminished in numbers, a mournful remnant only compared with what they once had been. There would be plenty of deer and roe and black game in the woods ; and though most men consider driving a far inferior sport to stalking, yet some delight in

it, and would doubtless be prepared to pay highly for the privilege. At any rate the shooting rent would be an appreciable sum. The sheep farmers would get what they are asking for now—the forests fenced. It is doubtful whether they would be satisfied with the result, or willingly turn their shears into axes. An advantage in this new system would be the greatly increased number of men who would be wanted in the country. Few are wanted on great sheep farms, fewer still in deer forests; it would be little to the profit of a landowner, then, to advocate emigration to his tenants, to destroy small holdings, or to pull down houses for the sake of creating a solitude; but the woodman would take the place of the shepherd, and, to a certain extent, of the keeper.

Large burns could be utilised for bringing down the timber, as they are now on the Continent, and as they used to be on a smaller scale in some parts of the Highlands. Many and many an hour have we passed, whilst waiting in a Ross-shire glen for a stag to get up or lie down, or do something which he would not do, in staring at the great precipice at its head, and the little black loch below with its curious, seemingly tide-worn sides. A good many years ago—thirty or forty, perhaps—when the wood of old dark Scotch fir which grew here far up the mountains was being cut down, a dam was made at the outlet of the loch, and when enough timber had been dragged into the little burn below an artificial spate used to be let loose, which floated the trees into a larger burn, and thence into a river. But one day, when a very large collection lay in or near the burn, the dam burst, and earth and rocks and water all came down together, completely burying the wood (which lies there still) and heaping up a great pile of rubbish as a monument. The loch's surface was lowered several feet, and it has looked a dismal place ever since. The fir which grew in this valley was excellent timber, fine, and firm, and enduring, as good as such wood could be.

If these ideas be correct the mountains of Scotland will some day be covered with wood, and the term "forest," which sometimes creates such confusion in the minds of Southerners, when applied to the bare sides of Ben Alder, or the Black Mount, or to the Reay Country, will again become a correct description of them. And then to our eyes, or rather to the eyes of our imagination, they will be spoilt. It would not be only the loss of the game which we should lament; it would be most painful to see roe and black game take the place of grouse; it would hardly be less grievous that the deer should live and not be seen. But the hills would become like those of the Hartz; they would be put on a level with the Schwarzwald; all their ruggednesses and irregularities would be hidden by trees; they would become monotonous through too much green. The Feldberg, the Schauinsland, and the Belchen in the Black Forest are considerably higher than Ben Nevis, Ben Cruachan, or Ben Mhor, and yet no one (unless he were a most prejudiced German) would say that the view of the Baden hills was equal to that of the Scotch. The former is fine, no doubt, a waving or a quiet sea of dark silver firs, relieved in

places by the brighter greens of beeches and larch. But when the sun is setting his rays never linger so lovingly here as on the purple and brown heather of Scotland, on the rocks and green burns and corries, and on the brilliant reds and yellows of bracken. There every colour and shade of colour is represented, and the sharp little peaks of granite or limestone, the great weather-worn boulders, and the small carpets of crimson moss act as mirrors, if we may use the word, alike for him and for the stormy shadows of the clouds. Amongst these other mountains, wood-covered to the very summit, you see nothing of this ; it may be there—some of it—but it has to be taken on trust.

The North is not what it once was, perhaps, but it is probably infinitely superior to what it will one day become. Let us be thankful for what is left us. We can still, even in these days of railways and steamers and tourists, get well away from them all. We can wander scores of miles over moors and hills known only to sportsmen and to keepers and shepherds. We can, if we please, make long journeys in districts little visited even by them, and from some height look at a view which, though far more extensive than any to be seen in England, shows no house or smoke, or sign that human being has ever been there—nothing but heather, and water, and stone, and sky. We can go for miles and miles on bare tops almost as lonely as it is possible for any place to be. Deer may pass there, but, except in the great heat of summer, they never linger, for there is no grass. Grouse may light there, but very seldom, for the heather is little else but a mass of bleached roots lightly woven over a thin skin of soil—if that can be called soil which consists entirely of the wear and tear of granite, and limestone, and quartz. Sheep never go there. Life is represented by a few ptarmigan and white hares, and a few great bees, which boom aimlessly about, seeming to seek for honey which they never find. There is some moss, brilliant in its greens, where there is moisture, and yellow and parched where it precariously exists upon the stone. Great grey, weather-stained, lichen-covered boulders are everywhere, standing up from amongst myriads of small fragments, which the frost and sun and rain of scores of centuries have broken up. You may go great distances and see nothing but these rocks and fragments, unless it be a black hole or small tarn, whose peaty water makes the stones in the shallows look as yellow as gold. It seems impossible that such a district as this should ever become desecrated or cockneyfied, or turned to any other use than that which it fulfils now. It is a wild place in summer even on a hot August day ; a sombre place in autumn, when all nature seems toned down to one shade of greyish brown ; a grim place in winter, when the wind sweeps over it and, howling, carries the snow in great drifts down to the lower glens. But white, or grey, or golden, there are some few people who look upon it as a part—not the least fair—of a country fairer to their eyes than the most fertile and richly wooded district in Britain.

Great Men's Relatives.

IN the friendship of great men, once they are passed away, there is this advantage, that you are not obliged to like their relatives. Clarendon says the English could have endured Oliver, if it had not been for the other Cromwells. He, they acknowledged, had a natural nobleness of demeanour : Henry gave himself airs, and it was too evident that the part of heir-apparent rather bored Richard. Certainly it is pleasant to know the best thoughts of Hooker's mind, without one's converse being broken upon by the shrill voice of Mrs. Hooker ; or to sail with Nelson into Aboukir Bay without having to follow him to Merton and see Sir William Hamilton trying to look happy.

And yet there could be few more interesting subjects of study than this of great men's relatives. The moment one is not bound to admire them, or be civil to them, one can profitably spend an hour in their company. They may at least teach us what not to be, and how not to do it. Sometimes we may learn from them a more useful lesson—that greatness is not necessarily goodness nor happiness. The moral is old enough, but none the less requires to be enforced again from age to age. Gray imagined a Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood. Well, poor Richard was that—a better man than his father, if old-fashioned canons of right and wrong are to hold, if ambition be at best but a splendid sin, if the meek are really blessed, if a good cause has no need of legions. Quintus Cicero, again, strikes one as a healthier type of man than his eloquent brother, for all Mr. Trollope's pleadings. Quintus has left us no Tusculan disputations ; but the record of an orderly and honourable life is worth a good many arguments on the immortality of the soul. Who would have been the most reliable friend in need, Goldsmith or his brother, the original of the Vicar of Wakefield ? Whose lot was the more enviable, Napoleon's or Lucien's ?

It is amusing or sad, according as you are of the Democritan or Heraclitan school, to take any prominent historic character, whom hitherto you have only known in his public or literary capacity ; and try to find out "all about him," as if you were employed by a Private Inquiry Office. You know that Wolsey was a pluralist, but were not perhaps aware that he had a natural son whom he made an archdeacon ; or that Milton's brother Christopher turned Catholic, and was knighted and made a judge by James II. ; or that Wesley's wife had a great deal to put up with from the Pontiff of Methodism ; or that Lord Stowell's harshness broke his son's heart.

But there are more agreeable discoveries to be made. For instance,

one would be glad of further acquaintance with Mr. Anthony Bacon, the "loving and beloved brother" of Francis, as the latter addresses him in the prefatory epistle to the first edition of the *Essays*. Anthony seems to have been prevented by ill-health from realising the high expectations his friends had formed of him. "I assure you," says Francis, "I sometimes wish your infirmities translated upon myself, that her Majesty might have the service of so active and able a mind; and I might be with excuse confined to these contemplations and studies for which I am fitted." The next edition of the *Essays* was dedicated to Sir John Constable, for Anthony "was with God," as Francis informs Sir John Bacon's wife, whom he described in 1603 as "an alderman's daughter, a handsome maiden, to his liking," proved ill-suited to him, or he to her; for the truth is difficult to get at. If one may judge from the sentiments expressed in the *Essays*, Bacon was hardly what is termed a marrying man. He scorns the poetic ideal of love, "as if man, made for the contemplation of heaven, and all noble objects, should do nothing but kneel before a little idol, and make himself a subject, though not of the mouth (as beasts are), yet of the eye, which was given him for higher purposes." And "he was reputed one of the wise men, that made answer to the question when a man should marry: A young man not yet, an elder man not at all."

In Bishop Hall's autobiography we get a glimpse of another Bacon, Sir Edmund, grandson of Sir Nicholas, and consequently nephew of Francis. He does not fail to exhibit the family characteristic of prudence. In 1605 Sir Edmund invited Hall to accompany him to Spa, or the Spa, as he calls it, representing "the safety, the easiness, the pleasure, and the benefit of that small excursion, if opportunity were taken at that time, when the Earl of Hertford passed as ambassador to the Archduke Albert of Brussels (*sic*)." Once on Belgian soil, Hall soon got into theological discussion with a Jesuit, whom he conceived he had worsted. Father Baldwin, however, an English Jesuit, sent Hall a polite invitation next day to come and renew the argument with himself. "Sir Edmund Bacon, in whose hearing the message was delivered, gave me secret signs of his utter unwillingness to give way to any further conferences, the issue whereof might prove dangerous, since we were to pass further, and beyond the bounds of the protection of our ambassador." In a subsequent discussion with a prior of the Carmelites, Sir Edmund, "both by his eye and tongue," wisely "took off" Hall, as the latter confesses.

Sir Edmund might have proved a useful private secretary to his uncle. On the whole you find quite as many cases of great men's relatives proving useful to them as of their being encumbrances. It is a good thing to see brethren working together in unity, as the Wellesleys in India, or the Wesleys in England, or the brothers Grimm, or the Schlegels. The ablest lieutenant of Frederick the Great was his brother Henri. "There is only one of us," the king once said, pointing

to Prince Henri, "who has never made a mistake." It is melancholy to remember that Henri hated the brother he served so well. Frederick did all he could to win his affection in vain. A pair of brother soldiers not less interesting to Englishmen are Henry V. and John Duke of Bedford. General Churchill, too, served with credit under Marlborough. The fame of the Napiers is still fresh. One would like to couple the Howes, but it is not fair to the hero of the 1st of June. Sir William was a brave soldier and nothing more.

Partnerships between fathers and sons are too numerous to be noticed, but there are a few curious instances in which the father has seconded the son. A certain King of Media appointed his father to a satrapy, and the sire quietly served under the son. But since the hereditary principle first found favour among men, no sovereign can have felt himself altogether a king while his father lived. Philip II. was constantly receiving advice from the ex-emperor, and must have felt bound at least to excuse himself when he did not follow it. How much the paternal superintendence annoyed him he showed by delaying the payment of the paternal pension. There are fathers, again, and more of them, perhaps, than we suppose, who have been content to be the humble admirers of their sons, and to bask in the rays of their good fortune. Old Mr. Richard Clive had never thought his son good for much till the news of the defence of Arcot arrived in England, but he gradually became immoderately proud and fond of his son, who joined filial piety to his other qualities. Robert cleared off the mortgages on the family estate, settled 800*l.* a year on his parents, and insisted that they should keep a coach. Mr. Clive now began to mix in fashionable society, and was presented at Court. The King graciously noticed him, and asked where Lord Clive was. "He will be in town very soon," said the honest squire quite aloud, "and then your Majesty will have another vote," which was true enough, but not intended for publication. One can scarcely be surprised that it was never thought expedient to confer a peerage on Mr. Richard Clive. On St. John's being created a viscount his father obtained a similar title, though by some blunder his patent was dated after his son's, so that the latter had the precedence. Their descendant still sits in the House of Lords as Viscount Bolingbroke and St. John. The above precedent, however, has by no means been invariably followed. It is pleasant to read how Rowland Hill, when he returned from the Peninsula a peer and a general, quietly took his seat at his father's table in the old Shropshire manor-house, not according to his rank, but simply according to his birth as a younger son. It is noteworthy that Lord Beaconsfield, with his usual good nature, turned Mr. Abney-Hastings into Lord Donington to lessen the distance between him and his son, the Earl of Loudoun.

One fact the student of history should not lose sight of. Great men, the best of them, think far more of their relatives than of the public; otherwise they would be, as Bristolle says of the man who should prefer

an habitual condition of solitude to society, either gods or brutes, either more or less than men. When one says that they think more of their relatives than of the community at large, one is not necessarily implying that they would prefer a son's interest to that of the State, but simply that that son's welfare and happiness is probably a more frequent subject of reflection than schemes of legislation or war. The circumstance is, by comparison, honourable to humanity. Vulgar personal ambition, ambition purely for self and selfish enjoyment, is rare. Cordially as he detested Shaftesbury, Dryden admits that that statesman neither plotted nor toiled for himself :

Great wits are sure to madness near allied,
And thin partitions do their bounds divide,
Else why should he, with wealth and honour blest,
Refuse his age the needful hours of rest ;
Punish a body which he could not please,
Bankrupt of life, yet prodigal of ease ?
And all to leave what with his toil he won
To that unfeathered, two-legged thing—a son.

Then it is a truism to observe that statesmen honestly conceive their own kith and kin to be endowed with higher aptitudes for administration than they may actually possess. Again, granted two men, one rather cleverer than the other, but the second a Secretary of State's cousin : could one blame the secretary for choosing his cousin as under-secretary rather than the slightly cleverer man ? The minister might argue with justice that the inferiority of talent in his kinsman was compensated for by the fact that he knew him well ; for no one will deny that it is an advantage to a chief to be thoroughly acquainted with the character and dispositions of his subordinates. Hence the shrewd and by no means cynical remark of Palmerston's, "The best man for any place is the man I like best."

The Complete Patron ; or, A Guide to Ministers, has yet to be written ; and very difficult it would be to lay down anything more than the vaguest rules for the distribution of loaves and fishes. But there are bright examples and examples to be shunned. After Robert Grosseteste had been named Bishop of Lincoln, his rustic brother called on him and solicited preferment. The Bishop replied that if he wanted a new plough or a yoke of oxen he would cheerfully pay for them ; but, he added, "A peasant I found you, and a peasant I shall leave you." The good Bishop might have put the truth a little more politely : possibly he feared that anything less than the plainest speech would not be understood. Napoleon once found himself in exactly the opposite position to Grosseteste, with a poor relative who only begged to be left alone and positively dreaded the idea of elevation out of his own homely sphere. It was quite a surprise to the Emperor, in the heyday of his glory, to learn that a mere parish priest in Tuscany bore the name of Bonaparte, and descended from a common ancestor with him. Straight-

way an aide-de-camp was despatched to Italy to ask the Abbé what he would like. The Emperor wanted him, if only for the sake of the family prestige, to accept a bishopric; and it was hinted that the purple would soon follow. The Padre would none of these honours at any price; and ended by convincing the officer of his sincerity. Napoleon shrugged his shoulders at his emissary's report, but did not insist.

To the question, What caused the fall of Napoleon? Talleyrand would have replied in two words: "His relatives." The Prince of Bénévent's answer is as correct as any that could be framed. Properly supported by Joseph in Spain, by Jerome in Westphalia, by Louis in Holland, by Murat in Naples, the Emperor would have been invincible. Talleyrand tells us that he warned Napoleon of the inevitable consequence of entrusting important interests to men like Jerome and Joseph. "Make them," I said to his Majesty, 'arch-chancellors, arch-electors, and so forth, as much as you please. Give them any number of honorary distinctions. Do not think of giving them real power.'" The ablest opponent of Napoleon during the first half of his career committed the same mistake on a smaller scale. Pitt, whose name was considered synonymous with patriot, would not see that his brother, Lord Chatham, was wholly unfit for high office. For more than six years, including two of war, he kept him at the head of the Admiralty, till something like a public outcry compelled the incapable Minister to resign. Pitt soon recalled him to the Cabinet as Lord President. The second Chatham was so dull a man that George III. hesitated to give him the Garter which he had offered to Pitt, and which the latter at once begged for his brother. Finally, the King consented, on the distinct understanding, as he wrote, that the honour should be considered as bestowed on the Pitt family in general. It is fair to Pitt to add that others than himself formed a mistaken estimate of the Earl's capacities. Even after the terrible fiasco of the Walcheren expedition, Lord Chatham was thought good enough to be Governor of Gibraltar. In 1789 Pitt had as colleagues in the Cabinet, his brother aforesaid, and his first-cousin, Mr. (afterwards Lord) Grenville, the Home Minister, who was just thirty years old. His Viceroy of Ireland was another first-cousin, the Marquis of Buckingham. The elder Pitt was equally partial to his connections, with results, at one time, mournful for his country and almost fatal to his own reputation. But in the administration of 1757-61 he found room for them all, without perceptible injury to the public. His brother-in-law, Lord Temple, held the Privy Seal; Temple's brother, George Grenville, was Treasurer of the Navy; James Grenville had a snug post, and Henry Grenville was duly provided for. On the other hand, it was no small gain to Pitt to be able to command the vast parliamentary influence of his relatives by marriage. There is no doubt he was devoted to Lady Hester; but he had loved wisely.

As a rule, great men have oftener helped their relatives than been helped by them. It is strange to see how, at the commencement of their

careers, some men of genius, who might have been expected to start in life backed by the eager friendship of powerful kinsmen, have—for all practical purposes—stood as much alone as the typical Scotch boy who comes to London with sixpence in his pocket. Read Byron's account of his first visit to the House of Lords. He seems, one of his biographers remarks, to have had "a keen and painful sense of the loneliness of his position." He could not find a single Peer to introduce him, and this from no lack of cousins in the Upper House. After wandering about for a while, he made his way into a room where the fees were to be paid—there is never any difficulty in finding such places. Next he entered the House itself. Only a few lords were present, and Byron was afraid to look at them. Without turning his eyes to the right or to the left, he advanced straight up to the woosack to take the oaths. In the Chancellor's seat sat Eldon, who tried to put the bashful lad at his ease, spoke kindly to him, and held out his hand. Byron replied to these advances with a stiff bow, and gave the Chancellor the tips of his fingers. He subsequently offered a lame excuse for his pertness, as one must consider it, remembering Eldon's position and the fact that Byron was then only known as the author of *Hours of Idleness*. "If," says Byron, "I had shaken hands heartily, he would have set me down for one of his party; but I will have nothing to do with any of them. I have taken my seat, and now I will go abroad." Where, all this time, was Lord Carlisle, whose "obliged ward and affectionate kinsman" had dedicated to him those very *Hours of Idleness*? In the preface to the volume in question Byron had spoken of the Earl's works as having long received the meed of public applause to which by their intrinsic worth they were well entitled. In *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*, published a few days after the author had taken his seat in Parliament, one perceives that the season of compliments between the obliged ward and his guardian is at an end:

Let Stott, Carlisle, Matilda, and the rest
Of Grub Street, and of Grosvenor Place the best,
Scrawl on till death release us from the strain,
Or common sense assert her rights again.

"It may be asked," comments Byron on himself, "why I have censured the Earl of Carlisle, my guardian and relative, to whom I dedicated a volume of puerile poems a few years ago. The guardianship was nominal—at least as far as I have been able to discover; the relationship I cannot help, and am very sorry for it; but as his Lordship seemed to forget it on a very essential occasion to me, I shall not burden my memory with the recollection;" and so on, and so on, in a style of increasing petulance, till Byron stoops to italicise the word *fools* that the reader may be under no mistake as to its application.

It is to be feared the twain were never reconciled. But Carlisle was no fool. In his youth the Government of the day held him to be so well worth enlisting on its side as to confer the order of the Thistle on him

when he had but just completed his nineteenth year. On his coming of age he was immediately sworn of the Privy Council. In 1780-2 he held the post of Viceroy of Ireland. Young Fox, in a letter to Richard Fitzpatrick, supposes he will have heard of Carlisle's green ribbon. "I think it," he observes, "one of the best things that has been done this great while." Which may well cause a smile. The Fox of 1767 was not exactly the Fox we think of as we contemplate the tomb in the Abbey, or recall the beautiful eulogy of Scott. But, it may be observed in passing, he was always too warm-hearted a man not to be something of a nepotist. He observes somewhere that a job and a fraud are very different things; and a little job for the sake of a relative would not have appeared to him too much amiss. From his nephew's memoirs of the Whig party one gathers that in the summer of 1806 he was meditating a pretty formidable one—no less than putting Lord Holland at the head of the Foreign Office. Now, Lord Holland, though with age and experience he developed into a meritorious politician, was at that time a young man absolutely unknown to the great body of the public except as the co-respondent in a divorce case, when he had been condemned to pay 6,000*l.* damages to Sir Godfrey Webster.

If relatives could ever have helped a man of genius too feeble to help himself, that man was Cowper. His father, as every one knows, was the second son of Spencer Cowper (a younger brother of the Chancellor, and first Earl Cowper), who was appointed Chief Justice of Chester in 1717, and afterwards a Judge in the Court of Common Pleas. Nor were the Cowpers unmindful of their duty to the young poet, for whom they procured the snug place of reading-clerk to the House of Lords. He had nothing to do in ordinary times but to read aloud the titles of bills, and draw a salary of 800*l.* a year. Even for such work he felt too nervous, and in a few weeks' time was compelled to resign his appointment. Before the close of the year he had to be placed under medical care. The Cowpers made the best of a bad business, and succeeded in placing another of their name—a near relative of William's—in the vacant post. Macaulay speaks of his silver voice and just emphasis, from which one presumes that the new clerk chanced to be the right man in the right place.

The poet has left a sonnet addressed to this Henry Cowper, on his "emphatical and interesting delivery" of the defence of Warren Hastings. "Thou art not voice alone," he assures him, "but hast beside both heart and head." Cowper was happy in his relatives, and rewarded their care of him in the manner they must have loved best. Among those whose memory his verse preserves may be cited his cousin, Anne Bodham—

Whom heretofore,
When I was young, and thou no more
Than plaything for a nurse,
I danced and fondled on my knee,
A kitten both in size and glee.

He proceeds to thank the gentle Anne for a purse she has made him, winding up with the slightly commonplace remark that he values the receptacle more than the gold it contains. But one may be sure the lines went the round of many an admiring tea-table. Possibly the great Mr. Newton himself deigned to praise them. In the epitaph on his uncle, Ashley Cowper, he draws so fine a character that one can only hope the facts were as true as doubtless the writing was sincere.

The lines on his mother's picture are not so much poetry as the simple expression of his thoughts by a poet, which many will hold to be the same thing. How fresh and natural are such recollections as the following :—

Thy nightly visits to my chamber made,
That thou might'st know me safe and warmly laid ;
Thy morning bounties ere I left my home,
The biscuit, or confectionery plum ;
The fragrant waters on my cheek bestowed
By thy own hand, till fresh they shone and glowed.

Pope has some equally genuine lines, in another style, on his own mother. When he prayed that the tender office of rocking the cradle of reposing age, of making languor smile, of exploring the thought, and of explaining the asking eye, might long engage him, he spoke from the heart, for he had proved himself a devoted son. Mrs. Pope lived happily under her son's roof till the age of ninety-three. She was forty-eight when she gave birth to Alexander—in the year of the glorious revolution. Pope's panegyric on his father may be described as the truth well put. Old Mr. Pope was in no sense a remarkable man ; and his son accordingly makes the most of his negative virtues. Marrying in his own sphere of life, he is praised for not having married discord in a noble wife. Then he is described as a stranger to civil and religious rage—

No courts he saw, no suits would ever try,
Nor dared an oath, nor hazarded a lie.

Quite so ; and for the best of reasons. Mr. Pope was a Roman Catholic, and extremely timid. The only course for honest men of his creed in the days of the penal laws was to keep quiet, if they valued their lands or their necks. There was no choice for them but between self-effacement and a life of plots and conspiracies. Even Pope's reputation, and the fact that he was only a Catholic in name, might not always have saved him from persecution, as he acknowledges, but for the good nature of the Government. Pope senior pushed prudence to such a degree that he was afraid to invest in the funds lest Parliament should one day take to raising money by confiscating all the seizable personalty of Papists. He had amassed a fortune of about 20,000*l.* as a linendraper, and, in the fashion of a ruder age, locked up this sum in a strong box. The greater part he spent before his death.

“For they said, He is beside himself.” Who said ? His kinsmen,

of course. Not only is the prophet too often without honour among those who should appreciate him best, but he may find it the hardest struggle of all to persuade them of his honesty or sanity. Mahomet blessed the name of Khadijah because she believed in him when no one else did. In truth, he might well have taken heart from the moment he had succeeded in convincing his wife. Had his first spouse been the petulant beauty who made light of Khadijah as old and ugly, the Crescent might never have been reared against the Cross, and history might be an entirely different book. When Joan of Arc determined to accomplish the deliverance of France, the first and most formidable opposition she had to encounter arose from her parents. They said they would rather see her drowned than exposed to the contamination of a camp. They seem to have scarcely had common faith in their daughter. Finally, it was an uncle—not her father—who consented to take her to Vaucouleurs to see the Sire de Baudricourt. The remainder of her task was comparatively easy. Only the first step cost trouble—the step across her own threshold. A homelier instance of the domestic difficulties of genius is found in the life of Mme. d'Arblay. Ere she was sixteen, Frances Burney had written a good deal, chiefly short stories for the amusement of her sisters. Her stepmother, however, disapproved of these literary recreations, and administered some good-humoured lectures on the subject. Fanny proved a dutiful child. Not content with relinquishing her favourite pursuit, she burned all her manuscripts. Perhaps the world did not lose so much after all. *Evelina* appeared when the author was twenty-six years of age. Alexandre Dumas the elder long remained sceptical of his son's powers as a writer. He is said to have been finally converted by a perusal of *Les Aventures de Quatre Femmes et d'un Perroquet*, published when young Dumas was twenty-two.

Milton's father attempted to dissuade him from the cultivation of poetry.

Nec tu vatis opus divinum despice carmen . . .

Nec tu perge, precor, sacras contemnere Musas. . .

The old gentleman possibly wished his son³ to be a good scrivener and no more. But this has been the common fate of bards. A quaint, though by no means an extraordinary, example of mistaken projects for a son is seen in the case of Hampden. His mother pressed him in his youth to ask for a peerage, which no doubt a man of his birth and wealth could have obtained of James I. for the asking—and the paying. Hampden could have rendered good service in the House of Lords, but the acceptance of honours from the king must have more or less attached him to the Court party. With all his honesty he might have been led to see many things with a different eye. The course of our annals need not necessarily have changed for that; but who knows? Suppose Hampden a peer, and, for his abilities and firmness, the trusted minister of Charles as well as James. Suppose Hampden convinced that the

power of Parliament required checking, and that the Crown should persist in the attempt to raise taxes on its own authority, who would have resisted the writ of ship-money? If one might hazard a guess, one would answer, Thomas Wentworth. Having Hampden on its side, the Government might have taken no trouble to win over Wentworth, or have felt that there was not room for both in one party. And we may depend upon it, Wentworth was determined to make himself a name.

Brougham's mother showed more wisdom than Hampden's. When she heard that Henry was Chancellor, she quietly said, "It's well, but for my part I had rather he had remained Mr. Brougham, and member for the county of York." The peculiar distinction of representing the undivided county of York would have ceased with the passing of the Reform Bill, but Brougham could not have been shelved by the Whigs in 1835 had he retained the facilities for making himself troublesome which a seat in the House of Commons alone could give. It may have been some foreboding of the future which in 1830 caused him to manœuvre for the Mastership of the Rolls, then tenable by a member of the Lower House. But it was felt that such an arrangement would have left him too powerful.

John Paul Richter's mother seconded her son in remarkable fashion. While he was yet waiting for fame, working steadily but gaining little, she was not satisfied with making their home as tidy and comfortable as might be, but toiled hard to earn a little money by spinning. Her receipts were duly entered in a book, from which one learns that for the month of March 1793, they amounted to two florins, fifty-one kreutzers, three pfennings—about four shillings in all. She had her reward. In 1796 came the brilliant success of *Hesperus*, and when the widow Richter died (in the following year) she was happy in the knowledge that Germany at length acknowledged John Paul for one of her great men.

It would be difficult to lay down a single proposition on the subject of heredity to which just exception might not be taken, but the fact about which one may feel surest seems to be the influence of the mother, whether consciously or unconsciously exercised. An unpleasant illustration appears in the characters of Letitia Bonaparte and Napoleon. She was sly, not to say given to fibs. He has been described as "the most colossal liar that ever lived." Readers of their Bibles need not go to secular history. Rebekah and Jacob offer a parallel case. But in nine cases out of ten the influence is for good. About the only mistake in Mr. Reade's delightful novel of *Hard Cash* consists in his making Mrs. Dodd pray that her son might never be a brave man like his father. What true mother would utter such a prayer? "Either this or upon this" has the more genuine ring; and if Englishwomen forbear to repeat a modern equivalent of the words to their soldier-sons, it is in the proud consciousness that no such lesson is needed.

No New Thing.

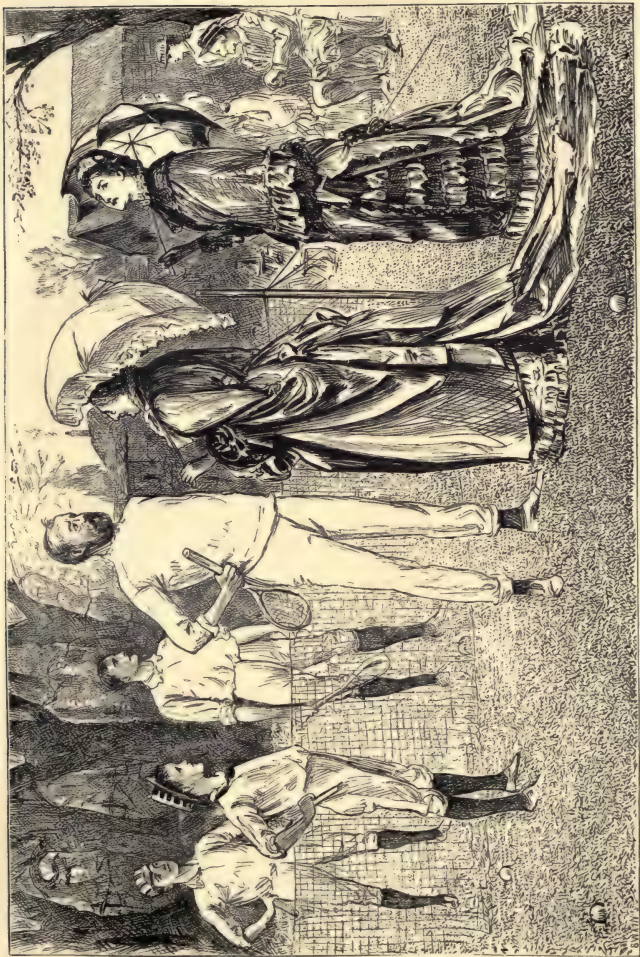
CHAPTER XII.

PHILIP EXEMPLIFIES A THEORY.



MARGARET STANNIFORTH, as the perspicacious reader will hardly require to be told, was not a strong-minded woman. Such claims to love and admiration as she possessed—and Hugh Kenyon was by no means alone in deeming her entitled to both—were assuredly not based upon any element of strength in her character, but rather, perhaps, upon the evidences of that weakness which used in old-fashioned times to be considered a woman's strength. She did not always know her own mind, and was painfully aware that she did not know it; without being what is called impulsive, she was yet

much under the influence of impulses; and in all things she was prone to be guided less by her head than by her heart. Of the latter the best part had been given away to her lost husband, and had not been recalled. With rare fidelity and imaginativeness she had kept constantly before her eyes the image of the man who had been so long dead, and it may truly be said that she never decided upon any course of action without first asking herself what his wishes would have been with regard to it. That her interpretation of his supposed wishes should have been for the most part devoid of all probable accuracy was but natural: she would have been a far more remarkable woman than she was, had it been otherwise. It is tolerably certain, for instance, that Jack Stanniforth, who had had the common sense of his family, would not have advised the adoption of our young friend Marescalchi, nor the frequent payment of that very expensive youth's bills; nor, it may be assumed, would he have held his widow called upon to provide a home and a liberal income for his



"BUT I WASN'T ASKED."

mother-in-law ; but, happily for Margaret, she was not troubled with disturbing doubts upon these and many other points, and seldom failed to convince herself that she had received a silent sanction for her least prudent proceedings. The process by which she arrived at this comfortable persuasion would have been found, if analysed, to take the form of a beautifully simple syllogism. Such and such things appeared to her, upon mature reflection, to be right ; Jack was always right ; therefore, Jack would have approved of her doing as she proposed. Thus, in perfect good faith, she invested her imaginary lord with the attributes of a constitutional sovereign, and proceeded from deliberation to action, fortified by a perfunctory formula of *Le Roy le veult*.

Now nothing could be more clear than that Jack would have been greatly displeased at any man addressing her as Colonel Kenyon had done ; still more would he have been displeased had he foreseen that Colonel Kenyon, his friend and executor, would be the man to offend in such a manner. Therefore, Margaret, although she had declared that she was not angry with Hugh, could not but feel that she had just cause for anger ; nor was her anger at all lessened by consciousness that, according to the generally received standard of conduct, the culprit had been guilty of no offence at all. People do marry again. The practice may be a reprehensible one, but it is not uncommon ; and, upon the whole, Margaret found that her chief grievance against Hugh was that he had so misunderstood her as to suppose her one of those people. When your friends begin to misunderstand you, you may forgive them ; but you are not far off from the point at which they must cease to be your friends any more. As Margaret had said, "it could never be the same thing again ;" and Hugh, for his part, was not long in reaching a similar conviction. There was no quarrel. On the contrary, vigorous efforts were made on both sides to avoid even the semblance of a coolness ; but in spite of these exertions—perhaps, to some extent, in consequence of them—the coolness existed, and made itself felt. Indeed, it would be difficult, under any circumstances, for a rejected suitor to remain with comfort in the same house with the lady who had rejected him ; and before a week was out Colonel Kenyon entertained no doubt as to the expediency of his quitting Longbourne. In the nick of time the Horse Guards considerably provided him with an easy means of retreat by promoting him to the command of a field battery at Shorncliffe. So the Colonel departed ; and as soon as he was gone Margaret's heart became softened towards him.

The absent, it is said, are always in the wrong ; but the absent enjoy also this counterbalancing privilege, that with the withdrawal of their persons the memory of their wrong-doing loses sharpness of outline. Margaret desired nothing more earnestly than to forget, if that might be, Hugh's unfortunate lapse from the path of duty, and there were times when she very nearly succeeded in doing so. She thought of

him and missed him greatly through the long summer days, while Mrs. Winnington, groaning over the heat, worked a huge fan with irritating rattle from morning to night; while soft-footed Mr. Langley came and went, bearing appeals for charity to the drawing-room or priestly counsel to Mrs. Prosser, of whose conscience he was the keeper; while the laughter and wrangling of the young people, rehearsing for the coming theatricals, rang through the house, and the hammering of the carpenters, who were knocking up the stage, was incessant.

After a great deal of discussion, and the usual difficulties with over-ambitious spirits, Philip had got his company together, and was laboriously drilling and coaxing its members into subordination. The piece that he had chosen was a comedy of modern life, the general drift of which was one that has served for many comedies, new and old. There was a young couple in it, who had become estranged, as young couples do in plays and sometimes in real life, for no particular reason, except that they were "half-angered with their happy lot;" there was a wicked and fascinating man of the world, who harboured fell designs against the lovely bride; there was a clever lady, who, after promoting this intrigue through two acts and a half, flirting desperately with the injured husband, and bringing about all sorts of painful situations, came out in her true colours in the *dénouement*, when she unmasked the villain and joined the hands of the erring and repentant pair; finally, there was the guileless husband of the above lady, whose mission it was to make the audience laugh by his mingled jealousy of and admiration for her, by his bewildered queries, and by the meekness with which, upon all occasions, he obeyed her impatient command to "go away somewhere and smoke."

The play, when first read out by Philip, was fortunate enough to meet with general approval, the only dissentient voice raised being that of Tom Stanniforth, whose notion of acting was dressing up, and who protested that a play without powder and patches was only half a play; but as to the distribution of the parts there was less unanimity. Miss Brune was to take the part of the clever woman—everybody agreed as to that; and we have seen in what manner she was subsequently induced to accept it.

"So far so good," said Mrs. Winnington, holding up the book, and surveying it through her glasses; "but now about the rest of the characters." She knew, if Tom Stanniforth did not, that masquerading is by no means the chief object of drawing-room comedies, and her eagle eye had at once detected the opportunities which this particular one might be made to afford for the furtherance of other and more important ends. "Mr. Marescalchi will of course be the unprincipled man of fashion," she went on. "Young Mr. Brune might do for his sister's husband. Very suitable, both those parts. Then we come to the young couple; evidently Edith and Mr. Stanniforth."

But Philip said, Oh, dear, no! that cast wouldn't do at all. How,

for instance, could you expect poor Walter to throw any animation into his acting, if his cue was to be blindly in love with his own sister? And then, to the general astonishment, he announced that he himself proposed to fill the part for which Walter was stated to be ill-qualified, while the latter was to play Strephon to Edith's Amaryllis, and Mr. Stanniforth—of all people in the world!—was to be the villain of the piece.

"Utterly preposterous and absurd!" cried Mrs. Winnington; and for once the chorus was with her.

But Philip answered imperturbably, "Not in the least absurd. Now, my dear Mrs. Winnington, I'll explain to you, if you will allow me, the principle upon which all good casts are formed. Your idea, which is that of the uninitiated public, is that every one is best able to represent the character which most resembles his own. Nothing could be more erroneous; exactly the reverse is the true state of the case. A man can't imitate himself; all the little peculiarities of a person of his own stamp seem to him so natural that he never notices them; whereas, the characteristics of his opposite will strike him at once, and he will accentuate them in his acting. That is what one has to bear in mind in assigning parts to performers. Now, supposing, for example, that you yourself were to do us the honour of wishing to appear on the stage with us, do you think I should ever dream of asking you to accept the part of an amiable and benevolent lady? Never! On the other hand, if I wished for any one to interpret faithfully the character of a selfish, hypocritical old sinner, I should think of you directly."

"That is nonsense," said Mrs. Winnington, turning rather red.

"I am very much disappointed to hear you say so. I thought you would agree with me so cordially that I was unfit to represent a knave as soon as I had expounded my theory to you."

"Your theory is nonsense," repeated Mrs. Winnington with decision.

"Really, Marescalchi, I am afraid it won't hold water in the present instance," chimed in Mr. Stanniforth. "I take it that I am about the worst actor of the lot, and you have given me the most important part in the piece."

"Nobody can say which is the most important part until the piece has been played," answered Philip oracularly. "We are all going to do our best; but we can't do justice to ourselves if the square pegs are put into the round holes."

Further protests were entered from various quarters; but as Philip stood firm, and declared that unless he were allowed to have his own way he would not act at all, he carried his point in the end. As the council broke up, he took an opportunity of whispering to Walter, "There, old man; don't say I never did you a good turn."

"I don't know what you mean," said Walter.

"Of course you don't," returned Philip, laughing, and walking away. That Philip had meant by this strange allotment of rôles merely to carry

out his whimsical theory was what nobody believed, nor did it occur to any one that he had been actuated by a good-natured desire to give two young lovers the occasion of playing husband and wife; but what was indeed his object seemed somewhat obscure. Only Margaret had formed a surmise upon the matter; and it was one which was not displeasing to her. She told him afterwards that he ought to be ashamed of himself.

"You have spoilt the play," she said, frowning and smiling upon him; "and Nellie will not thank you, you may be sure. If she was to have a fictitious husband for one evening, you surely need not have objected to Walter's being the man."

Philip seemed greatly amused. "Oh, Meg, Meg," he cried, "what a designing old match-maker you are becoming! I haven't spoilt the play a bit; it will be the greatest success that ever was known; and in the meantime you are as good as a dozen plays, all of you. What criminal folly are you allowing your brains to hatch, you improvident woman? Do you know she won't have a penny, ma'am?"

"Ah, Philip!" sighed Margaret; "money is not everything."

"No; nor is love everything. One wants a happy combination of the two, I suppose, and that is not easy to achieve. Not that I am in love with Nellie Brune; and Heaven forbid that I should suppose her capable of falling in love with so unworthy an object as myself. Don't you see that I can't afford to fall in love with her?"

"A man can always make an income for himself," said Margaret.

"Can he? I think I know some men who have a fatal power of spending twice as much as they are likely ever to earn. Don't build castles, Meg; it's a shocking bad habit. Or, if you must build them, build them for yourself, not for other people. Otherwise they will come tumbling down about your poor ears, roofs, and battlements, and all, one of these fine days; and when I come to dig you out of the ruins, you will turn and revile me, and say it was all my fault."

She shook her head. "No; I shall never say that."

"Ah! you don't know what you will say. Let us get back to our play-acting; it's a thousand times more satisfactory a game than real life."

Whether satisfactory or not to the majority of the performers, the fashion after which Philip had chosen to conduct his play-acting was productive of immense amusement to one at least of those who attended the subsequent rehearsals. Mr. Brune perfectly understood, and to some extent participated in, the half good-humoured, half malicious, pleasure which Marescalchi derived from the spectacle of incongruity; and in truth, Tom Stanniforth, pacing the stage with creaking boots, and giving utterance in a loud hearty voice to the most outrageous and immoral sentiments, was a legitimate subject for mirth of the quieter kind. Tom had thrown himself into his task with all his wonted energy; he had learnt by heart every word he had to say; he was submitting with much docility to be educated into the semblance of a base

deceiver ; and there really seemed to be every chance that he would eventually pull through quite as successfully as a painstaking man without a vestige of histrionic talent could be expected to do. He had, however, a way of frowning and shaking his head after each cynical soliloquy—as though he felt it incumbent upon him to offer some gentle reminder that it was a purely fictitious personage, not by any means Tom Stanniforth, who was speaking—which was irresistibly comical. Mr. Brune would sit in a corner, watching this conscientious actor and laughing softly to himself, by the hour together.

One afternoon Mrs. Winnington joined him, and asked him whether he did not think it was a great deal too bad that everybody's pleasure should be interfered with, and a good play turned into a positive farce, only in order to gratify the whim of a spoilt boy. "Mr. Stanniforth is so accommodating and kind that he would do anything that he was asked to do," she said ; "but it is easy to see that he has been forced into accepting a thoroughly uncongenial part."

"But he does it so well," Mr. Brune remarked.

"Do you think so? Well, I can't agree with you. He is doing his utmost certainly ; he would be sure to do that. But for Mr. Stanniforth to attempt to personate selfishness and duplicity is quite absurd. He is too—too—what shall I say?"

"Genuine?" suggested Mr. Brune resignedly.

"Exactly so : he is far too genuine for that kind of thing. Now young Marescalchi——"

"Oh, but he is genuine, too—in his way. He is a genuine humourist ; you must allow that."

"How so? I don't quite understand you. To my mind, he is simply mischievous and malevolent. To put the play upon the stage in the way that he is doing is to insult the intelligence of his audience."

"On the contrary, he is paying a high compliment to the delicacy of your perceptions. He is going to offer you a really fine piece of comedy in the place of a rather dull play ; and you ought to be grateful to him."

"It appears that your notions of comedy and humour differ from mine," said Mrs. Winnington, who disliked Mr. Brune, and suspected him, not without reason, of sometimes laughing at her.

Nevertheless, when the day of representation came, Mrs. Winnington was compelled to add a grudging contribution to the general plaudits, and to confess that the result belied her anticipations. Philip had done wonders with his somewhat unpromising troupe. Patiently and carefully had he drilled them, day after day, and evening after evening, and now his labour met with its just recompense. Nellie Brune, who was a very fair actress, and had had some previous experience to guide her, would have done well even without coaching ; and as for the others, if their instructor could not give them talent, he had at least taught them how to stand and sit, how to manage their voices, and how to get off the stage. He had also taken much pains with the subordinate personages,

whose names and characters need not be particularised here, showing them every opportunity of making a point, and gently fanning their self-love with many a judicious word of surprise and admiration. And all the time he had held his own part in reserve. His duties as general instructor had furnished him with an excuse for reading rather than acting his share of the dialogue, and perhaps he had designedly kept himself in the background up to the last moment; for he had not a soul above small effects. Even the country gentlemen who, with their wives and families, made up the bulk of the audience, and whose critical faculties were scarcely likely to be of a sensitive order, could not but perceive and wonder at the skill with which he transformed a ludicrous and undignified part into a pathetic one; and that without missing a particle of its humour or being guilty of the smallest exaggeration. Those who applauded so loudly could not have given very definite reasons for their applause perhaps; but it was vaguely borne in upon them that they were being treated to the spectacle of a *tour de force*, and it put them in good humour, and made them feel how clever they must be to have discovered that much.

It was one of Philip's rules to study every part that he undertook from observation of some living model: all true artists adopted that plan, he declared, and all art was nothing but imitation. In the present instance he had been pleased to select Colonel Kenyon as the groundwork of his conception of a fond and foolish husband; and Margaret, who believed herself to be alone in detecting this detail, and who was somehow a little pained by it, was compelled to acknowledge that the portrait was both a faithful and a suggestive one. Poor Hugh! it had never occurred to her before, but now it seemed obvious enough, that he was just the man to be led by the nose all his life by some woman. What a dismal instance of the irony of Fate that she, who wanted to be led, and had no capacities for leading, should be that one! Once or twice it flashed across her with a thrill of alarm that Philip might have some inkling of what she earnestly desired to keep secret for ever. In her heart of hearts she was mortally afraid of being laughed at by Philip; and what son can hear without more or less of covert laughter that a man has been making love to his mother? She turned these things over in her mind while Philip tugged at the long moustache which he had affixed to his upper lip, while he stretched out his legs, stuck his hands in his pockets, and debated simple propositions with an exact reproduction of Hugh's slow and sapient smile; and at the end of the first act she was as nearly being angry with her adopted son as she had ever been in her life. Mr. Brune, who was sitting behind her, leant over the back of her chair, when the curtain fell, and startled her by remarking abruptly—

“And yet there are people who won't be convinced that we are all descended from apes.”

“Don't be unkind,” pleaded Margaret.

"Why not? I object to monopolies. Why should that very clever and diverting youth have things all his own way?"

"I know what you mean; but it isn't meant for unkindness. There is nothing in it that could hurt any one's feelings."

"H'm! I am not sure that Kenyon would quite agree to that. However, he is not here, so we need not trouble ourselves about him. Let us be charitable, and assume that he would like it. For my part, I admit that I am enjoying it hugely."

"Then don't call people apes," said Margaret.

"Apes are very cheerful little beasts, and some of us, you know, make great pets of them. I will say, for yours, that he is an admirable specimen of the race."

Margaret sighed impatiently. "I thought you had given up saying disagreeable things about Philip. You know how it pains me to hear you talk like that."

"You ought not to mind what a sour old man says. Do you know that all my hops are mildewed, and that I shall be hundreds of pounds out of pocket by the end of the year? Let me have a little latitude of speech for one evening. Philip can't hear me, any more than Kenyon can hear him; and I am speaking to a lady who is not easily prejudiced. Do you remember how desperately I offended you by the language I used about your *protégé* on the first evening of his arrival, ever so long ago?"

"Yes, I remember; why do you remind me of it? I thought you very unkind and unjust; and I still think that you were so."

"I dare say I was. Partly so, at all events; for I certainly should not accuse our young friend of lacking courage now-a-days. I wonder, though—speaking quite in the abstract, you understand—whether it is possible for a first-rate actor to be a thoroughly honest and straightforward man. Don't come down upon me with Macready and other honoured names, please; there must be exceptions to every rule; and, besides, honesty is a relative term. I know many highly respected and respectable persons whom it would be unsafe to take literally; they couldn't be absolutely candid if their lives depended upon it."

"I don't know what you are driving at," said Margaret, who, however, knew perfectly well.

"I am not driving at anything; I am drifting agreeably upon a sea of doubt and speculation. Given a man with an extraordinary power of personating characters differing from his own, wouldn't it be rather a strange thing if he never made use of it off the stage?"

"If you mean Philip, I can only say that he is always candid with me," declared Margaret, with some audacity.

"Ah, you won't stay in the regions of the abstract. Well, you ought to know whether Philip is candid or not. As for me, I am only a spectator; and perhaps I don't see so much of the game as I fancy I do. He is not particularly candid with me; but then a man does not

forfeit his claim to straightforwardness by exercising a little reserve towards individuals. Moreover, he doesn't like me."

"That is entirely your own fault," Margaret was going to say; but she bethought her that, if matters turned out according to her wishes, Mr. Brune would some day be asked to accept Philip as his son-in-law; so she substituted: "I am sure you are mistaken. He may be a little afraid of you, perhaps; many people are, you know."

Probably there is no man living who is not secretly pleased at being told that he is feared. Mr. Brune smiled, and remarked that he had not supposed himself so alarming. Then the curtain rising upon the first scene of the second act put a stop to conversation, and Margaret returned to contemplation of the figure upon the stage which interested her the most. Philip's excellent mimicry of Colonel Kenyon provoked her no longer; she had fallen into a fresh train of thought, in which Hugh had no part; and while the plot of the comedy was unfolding itself, she was wondering whether the open-mouthed adoration with which Philip was regarding Nellie could be altogether assumed.

He had told her emphatically that he was not in love with Miss Brune; but he had given her to understand that he was not in love because he did not deem it prudent to allow himself to be so, and that seemed almost tantamount to a confession that only prudence held love in check. Moreover, notwithstanding the assertion which she had just made that Philip was always candid with her, Margaret very well knew that she did not possess his whole confidence. She was sometimes tormented by terrible fears on his behalf. He had no vices, she thought—for extravagance cannot fairly be called a vice—but it is not always vicious men who make the most hopeless shipwreck of their lives; and, oddly enough, one of the chief dangers which she dreaded for him was precisely that which those who took a less partial view of his character would have declared him utterly unlikely to incur—that of a hasty marriage with some one inferior to him in rank. Philip's character, like that of most people, was marked by some apparent inconsistencies, and, also like that of most people, presented but few traits upon which any plausible theory of his fate could be built. One certain thing about him was that he would never be the victim of a hopeless passion. It was not in his nature to love those by whom he was not beloved, and on the other hand it was so delightful to him to be worshipped that he was likely to fall, at least for a time, completely under the dominion of the worshipper, whoever he or she might be. Thus much Margaret understood; though she did not put the case to herself quite in these words. She would have substituted generosity, impulsiveness, and quick sympathies for the vanity and selfishness with which some of his intimates credited him; but the peril remained the same; and it was, among other reasons, because she discerned it that she so anxiously desired to make use of Nellie Brune as a beacon to divert Philip's eyes from the flickering will-o'-the-wisps that flank the path of all young men. It

must be added that she conscientiously believed this fate to be an entirely honourable and blissful one for Nellie, whom she looked upon in some sort as her daughter, and loved with all her heart.

If the young lady who was thought worthy of being entrusted with such high responsibilities had been in the secret of Mrs. Stanniforth's scheme, she could have done no more towards the promotion of it than she was doing that evening. Everybody agreed that Miss Brune was charming. "She has been well coached," said her father, who hardly recognised Nellie in the brilliant and witty woman of the world whom she represented; but Philip, who admired all pretty women, and had always admired this one excessively, declared openly that she was irresistible, and told her in so many words that he wished to goodness he could summon some benevolent fairy to convert their mock destinies into a reality. More than once in the course of the proceedings he said to himself that if Nellie had had a large fortune, and if Fanny had married the greengrocer, as she ought to have done—if, in short, he had not been an unlucky beggar with whom all things went askew—he could have wished for no happier lot in life than that fictitious one which was his for a couple of hours.

There had always been a sort of intermittent flirtation between Philip and Nellie. During his school days the former had been over head and ears in love with the pretty little tomboy who used to ride and fish and play cricket with him, and he had plainly declared his intention of making her his wife some day—an arrangement which she had promised to consider of. Later on, when Mr. Marescalchi had fallen under the sway of other feminine influences, his affection had assumed a more brotherly character, and he had been wont to make Miss Brune the confidante of the passions which had from time to time ravaged an inflammable heart. He had, however, been in the habit of returning to his loose allegiance at regular intervals, and had frequently given Nellie to understand that, despite some passing infidelities, there was but one woman in the world with whom he could seriously contemplate spending his life. Nellie took these periodical fits of devotion very much for what they were worth. To the best of her belief she was not at all in love with Philip, and her eyes were open to all his failings; but she had a strong affection for him, she was proud of what she considered her influence over him, and upon the whole she liked him better when he was pretending to be in love with her than when he was pretending to be in love with some one else. She understood him sufficiently well to be aware that with him nearly all emotion was pretence, of a conscious or unconscious kind.

To-night he was in one of his most lover-like moods. When the theatricals were over and dancing had begun, he publicly laid down the unreasonable proposition that those who had been united in the play which was at an end ought to remain partners for the rest of the evening; and before the dissentient groans which responded to him had died

away he had passed his arm round Miss Brune's waist and whirled her off, whispering, "Just for this one evening, Nellie. You owe me some reward, you know, for all the trouble I have taken to help on your triumph."

Nellie laughed, and did not say "No." There was no one else present whom she particularly cared about dancing with, and Philip was beyond all comparison the best waltzer in the county. So, through three consecutive dances, this couple enjoyed an uninterrupted *tête-à-tête*, while Margaret looked on with contented eyes, and good-natured people remarked what a handsome pair they were, and ill-natured ones wondered what Mr. Brune could be thinking of to allow that sort of thing.

Meanwhile, the member for Blackport was not in his usual state of happy acquiescence in the course of events. He had danced once with Edith, who had said "Yes" and "No," and "Oh, really?" when he had addressed her, and who evidently had not heard one word in ten of his conversation. He had then resigned her to Walter Brune, and had stood with his back against the wall, wrapped in somewhat sombre reflection. He began to think that, after all, Edith would hardly do. She was a sweet girl, and she had a pretty face, and that little, timid air of hers was attractive enough for a time; but she was not interesting: perhaps she was a trifle insipid. Just as he arrived at this conclusion he caught sight of her engaged in animated discourse with Walter, and, for the first time in his life, he experienced an uncomfortable impression that he was growing old. After which he glanced at Philip and Nellie, and felt older still. Finally he said to himself, rather inconsequently, that he didn't see why the young fellows should have everything their own way, and, crossing the room with the firm stride of decision, planted himself in front of Miss Brune.

"May I be honoured with a dance?" he asked.

Fortune favours the brave. Nellie hesitated for a moment, looked him straight in the face, and then gave a little bow. What she meant him to understand was that he had no business to make such a request; but that, since he had thought fit to make it, she would not be rude enough to meet him with a refusal; but it is doubtful whether he gathered so much as that from her face.

"I was afraid," said he, after he had twice made the circuit of the room, and his partner had signified to him that she was out of breath, "that you would dismiss me with ignominy. I wasn't quite sure whether our truce was to last up to bedtime, or to terminate when the curtain fell."

During the rehearsals, when Mr. Stanniforth had been compelled to meet his implacable foe every day, it had been agreed between them that, for the comfort of all concerned, it would be best that they should behave as friends for the time being, and out of this convention had sprung a considerable degree of intimacy which Nellie now felt that it would be rather absurd to put a stop to.

"You seem determined to reopen that disagreeable subject," she said.

"I? Indeed, Miss Brune, I should only be too glad to dismiss it for ever. Is it peace, then?"

"Well," answered Nellie slowly, "I suppose so. If, after all my rudeness and ill-temper, you care to make peace with me, I don't think I ought to refuse."

"Ah!" cried Stanniforth, with rather imprudent exultation; "I told you we should be friends before long."

Nellie drew up her slight figure, and looked displeased. "Oh, but excuse me, I said nothing about friendship. There may be such a thing as peace between enemies, may there not?"

"A peace of that kind is not likely to be very durable, I am afraid. Still, it may last my time. I don't think I shall be much longer in this house, do you know?"

Nellie said, "Indeed?"

"I think I shall be off in a day or two, and I am very sorry for it. I must say so, since you won't. Between ourselves, I fancy that Margaret wants to get rid of me."

"Why should she wish that?"

"Ah, that is exactly what I should like to know; but I'm afraid there isn't much doubt as to the fact. Until about a week ago she was always begging me to stay on till the autumn; and, to tell you the truth, I had made up my mind to be persuaded, and had got down a lot of blue-books and reports to work at in the intervals of idleness; but latterly there has been a sort of awkwardness and constraint. I don't know what it is all about, I'm sure; only this morning, when I threw out a feeler by remarking casually that I thought I should have to be moving on next week, she expressed no consternation at all."

"How mortifying!" exclaimed Nellie, unable to repress a slightly malicious laugh at the sight of his honest, puzzled face. "And so the blue-books will have to be packed up again."

"It looks like it. I am not fond of thrusting myself upon people who don't want my company."

"I am sure that is the last thing you would ever be guilty of," said Nellie demurely.

"You are very severe, Miss Brune. Happily, I am in a position to heap coals of fire upon your head. Do you know that your father has just given me an invitation to stay at Broom Leas, and that I have declined it? I don't mind telling you that it was a great sacrifice. You may guess why I made it."

Nellie was a good deal taken aback and much more ashamed than the occasion warranted. "I don't think that it could be much of a sacrifice," she said; "for you would be bored to death with us; but I should be very sorry indeed if I thought that anything I had said or done could make you imagine that you would not be welcome. Besides," she

added, "I could easily go away. I have an aunt in Devonshire with whom I always spend a fortnight in the summer, and I know she can take me at any time."

"That," said Mr. Stanniforth gravely, "is very considerate of you. Only, I think that if you were away from Broom Leas, I shouldn't much care about going there."

A sudden shock of alarm sent the blood into Nellie's cheeks. Was it possible that the pertinacious friendliness of her hereditary enemy could be explained upon another and a less agreeable hypothesis than that of abstract philanthropy? In an instant she had dismissed the notion as ridiculous, and had inwardly laughed at herself for having entertained it. Still, it left her a trifle ill at ease.

"Of course it would never do," she answered hurriedly; "it would look so odd. You would be very uncomfortable too; for there would be nobody to look after the house and see that you had eatable dinners."

"And I am so particular about my dinner," Mr. Stanniforth remarked.

"So that, if you should change your mind," continued Nellie, opening and shutting her fan nervously—"I mean, if you really wished to see something of farming and to spend some days with my father—I hope you would not allow me to stand in your way."

The invitation was not an over-cordial one; but Tom Stanniforth appeared to be quite satisfied with it.

"I'll tell you what," he said; "I wouldn't go straight from this to you, because you have all of you really had enough of me for the present; and I believe, too, that I ought to run down and see my father, who is getting to be a very old man, and who writes rather plaintively about his loneliness every now and then; but if you would have me for a day or two in September, I should enjoy it of all things. Without any humbug, I *am* anxious to get some hints about farming. I have a property of my own, upon which I mean to settle down one of these fine days, and I am ashamed to say that, at present, if I know oats from barley it is about as much as I do."

"Very well," said Nellie, smiling; "then we shall expect you at harvest-time. Perhaps it might amuse you to see a harvest home."

"Thank you very much indeed," answered Mr. Stanniforth with alacrity; "that will be the very thing."

It was thus that the traditional hospitality of the Bruness triumphed over prejudice, subdued animosity, and was in the sequel productive of much trouble to Mrs. Winnington and others.

CHAPTER XIII.

MR. BRUNE GETS HIS HARVEST IN.

Mrs. WINNINGTON had not lived for a matter of sixty-odd years in the world without having acquired a measure of philosophy. Experience had not, perhaps, taught her wisdom, but it had given her some knowledge of the nature of men and things, and it had dowered her with a certain dogged patience, which enabled her to put a good face upon temporary checks. When, therefore, Tom Stanniforth left Longbourne without making any declaration of his sentiments with regard to Edith, she did not for a moment give way to despair. Love at first sight was, as she was aware, an exceptional phenomenon and one which could not be counted upon as likely to occur in any individual case; nor indeed had Mrs. Winnington, in her most sanguine moods, expected to bring matters to a crisis within the space of a few weeks. So speedy a success would have been a rare stroke of fortune, just as it would be a piece of singularly bad luck if Mr. Stanniforth, who had remained a bachelor for more than half his life, were to yield to other fascinations before he saw Edith again. Mrs. Winnington accepted the chances of the game with all the outward equanimity of a practised player, and smiled sweetly upon her prey as she bade him goodbye, cordially re-echoing his wish that they might meet in London next spring, if not sooner. She hoped it might be sooner, she said, and added within herself an asseveration that it most certainly should be; but that this joyful reunion was to be brought about no later than in the following month, through the instrumentality of Mr. Brune, was more than she bargained for, Mr. Stanniforth not having thought it necessary to mention the circumstance.

It is often instanced as a proof of the good will of Providence towards mankind that horses, elephants, and other domestic animals should be ignorant of their own strength: perhaps we ought to be no less thankful that ladies of Mrs. Winnington's stamp seldom succeed in gauging the measure of man's timorousness. It would be difficult to say why Tom Stanniforth should have been afraid of a fat, smiling woman who had no hold over him and could do him no possible injury; but the fact remains that he was so, and that, knowing what her wishes were, and having very nearly made up his mind not to gratify them, he drew a long breath of relief as soon as he had escaped from her presence.

Far, however, as that mature strategist was from being dismayed, she was a little disappointed and somewhat out of temper; and when Mrs. Winnington was out of temper those about her fared sadly. For several days she made the lives of the inhabitants of Longbourne a burden to them; after which she discovered that the state of her health absolutely required three weeks of Homburg, where, as she had seen by the papers, the fashionable world which her soul loved was at that time largely represented.

"It is a ruinously expensive journey," she remarked to Margaret. "Of course we shall travel like the paupers that we are, going straight through, and engaging a couple of rooms on the second floor of some horrible little public-house when we arrive. I am sorry for poor dear Edith's sake that everything will be so uncomfortable; still I feel that it is a positive duty to go."

Mrs. Stanniforth did not accompany the travellers to Germany. Her share in the expedition was confined to the defrayal of its cost and to telegraphing to secure suitable lodging for her mother and sister at their journey's end. As the waters promptly brought the gout out of the former lady's system, and had the effect of keeping her (as she wrote) "upon the flat of her back in screaming agonies" for ten days, it may be presumed that Miss Winnington had a bad time of it. Happily, however, the workings of human affairs are such that what is one person's loss is very commonly another's gain; and if Edith had to pass through a period of vicarious martyrdom, those whom she had left behind her at Longbourne enjoyed, by way of compensation, a brief taste of the blessings of peace.

Philip, who was much in Nellie's society at this time, declared to her that he had never been so happy before in his life. "All things considered," said he, "I am inclined to think that nothing suits me like domesticity. Meg and I lead a sort of Darby and Joan life, and we enjoy it prodigiously. We don't talk much; for there is an unspoken agreement between us to avoid all mention of absent friends and other unpleasant topics; we sit beaming at one another and hugging ourselves in a sybaritish contentment. She is very busy, as she always is, in a quiet, leisurely sort of way, with her correspondence and her charities and what not; and I twirl my thumbs and watch her, which is delightful. Did you ever notice what a soothing kind of person Meg is to watch? She is never in a hurry; she doesn't upset things, or catch her drapery upon corners of the furniture, and her dress doesn't accompany all her movements with a maddening swish-swish, like the dresses of some ladies whom we know. I should doubt whether there is another woman in the world so pleasant to live with as Meg. She never rubs you the wrong way; she never asks you whether you would like this or that; she knows by intuition what you want, and there it is always at your elbow."

"She spoils you," said Nellie.

"Just so; and if there is a thing I love it is being spoilt. I should like to go on existing in this way to the end of my days."

"It wouldn't be good for you," said Nellie, shaking her head wisely.

"Don't you think so? Perhaps you are right. Nice things never are good for one, and no doubt a little bracing is expedient from time to time. Well, we shall all be braced soon, when Mrs. Winnington comes back with renewed vigour to tell us about all the dukes and duchesses

whom she has encountered at Homburg, and to ask me whether I have yet decided upon some means of making an honest livelihood. There is no complaint so tantalising as the gout. It is for ever threatening terrible things, but somehow or other it won't proceed to extremities—or rather it won't proceed beyond them. And yet there are so many vital points open to attack. Possibly Mrs. Winnington may not possess a heart, but I know she has a stomach, and, considering the reckless manner in which she often treats it, it certainly ought not to be an invulnerable one. Still, it is borne in upon me that she will die in a green old age, after having worried all the rest of us into our graves. Meanwhile, let us make the most of an interval of calm."

"If you are so fond of a quiet life, why are you perpetually running away from it?" asked Miss Brune pertinently.

"Business," answered Philip. "I have business sometimes, though you might not think it, to look at me. I shouldn't go to London at this time of year if I could help it."

The answer was a moderately truthful one. It was indeed a sense of duty rather than inclination that led Mr. Marescalchi to pay occasional flying visits to Coomassie Villa at this season; and although, when once he was there, the mystery and fun of the thing pleased him well enough, he was never sorry to return to the superior luxuries and refinements of Longbourne. True to her established rule of conduct, Margaret asked no questions, thereby escaping the proverbial fate of those who thus court deception. When Philip remarked casually that he was going up to town from Saturday to Monday to do some shopping and get his hair cut, she did not remind him that Saturday afternoon is not a favourable time for making purchases in London, or point out that it was physically impossible that his hair could be any shorter than it was already. She said nothing; but went about her avocations with a smiling face and an uneasy heart, telling herself that in this she was but submitting to the destiny of all fond and wise mothers, and taking comfort from the lesson which experience had taught her, that as soon as her boy got into trouble of any serious nature, he would be tolerably certain to come to her in order to be helped out of it.

Thus the summer slipped quietly and imperceptibly away. The mornings and evenings became chilly; the fields grew ripe for the sickle, and patches of red and yellow began to show themselves upon the green of the woods. Then came harvest time and the slaughter of the partridges. It was not until the middle of September that Mrs. Winnington, who had proceeded from Homburg to Switzerland (by the doctor's orders, she averred), reappeared, bringing her sheaves with her. She was one of those persons who think it their duty, whenever they visit the Continent, to encumber themselves with a store of cheap presents for those whom they have left behind them. It was not Mrs. Winnington's habit to give money to the servants at Longbourne; there were too many of them, she said; and, besides, they ought not to be led to

expect tips from one of the family ; still, she should like them to think that they had all been remembered. Consequently, on the evening of her return from abroad, she would sail majestically into the housekeeper's room, bearing an ancient leather bag, from whence issued a bountiful supply of thimbles, Palais-Royal jewellery, and the like, while at the bottom of this cornucopia there commonly lurked some specially hideous gift, destined for the mistress of the house.

"It is so difficult to choose anything that dear Margaret will like," Mrs. Winnington would often say ; "but I think one is always safe with some little ornament for the drawing-room table."

This time, however, the drawing-room was spared, and it was the hall that was decorated with a loud-voiced cuckoo clock, which had been picked up a bargain at Interlaken. The slumbers of the entire household were disturbed by the periodical hootings of this delightful acquisition up to two o'clock at night, when it triumphantly gave forth its note thirty-six consecutive times ; after which it suddenly ceased from troubling, and the weary had rest. Nothing would induce it to resume its labours on the following morning, and suspicions of foul play rested upon various persons ; but, fortunately, Mrs. Winnington had come home in the best of humours, and was not disposed to quarrel with anybody.

At breakfast she gave, as Philip had predicted she would, a detailed description of all the exalted personages whom she had fallen in with at Homburg, and of how delighted they had been to see her again, and how they had been wondering, all through the London season, what could have become of her, and how Lady This and Lady That had inquired very kindly after dear Margaret, and had said what a pity it was that she should shut herself up so. And what made these reminiscences so cheering was that the great people had not confined themselves to empty civilities.

"Dear Margaret, I don't know what you will think of me. It seems very unkind to leave you again so soon, after having been away all this time ; but I am afraid we cannot manage more than three weeks here at present. People laugh at me when I say that my time is not my own ; and they won't believe that I would far rather remain quietly here than rush about visiting from house to house. Of course there is this to be said, that, for dear Edith's sake, I ought not to drop old friends ; and with so many, you know, it is a case of out of sight out of mind. Very cordial and kind if they happen to meet one ; but if they don't——" Mrs. Winnington finished her sentence with an expressive shrug of her ample shoulders. "In any case, you may count upon us for Christmas," she added reassuringly.

All this was very nice ; but there was a cloud upon Margaret's brow, a certain guilty unwillingness to meet her mother's eye, which that observant lady could not help detecting in the long run. As soon as breakfast was over, she took her daughter aside, and interrogated her affectionately.

"Now, my dear child, I do trust you are not feeling hurt at my running away from you. It really is a matter of duty. If it were not for dear Edith, I should ask for nothing better than to be always with you. I am sure you must be aware of that."

Margaret, without intentional irony, assured her mother that she had never entertained the smallest doubt upon that point, and added that she was only too glad that Edith should have every opportunity of seeing the world and people. "Especially men. It would be a great misfortune if she were to decide her fate, or if it were to be decided for her, too hastily."

"Oh, my dear, I have decided nothing. Mr. Stanniforth would be suitable in a great many ways, but of course I don't mean to say that she might not do better. Indeed, I almost think that she *ought* to do better, if only one were not so cut off from all society! But if it is not that, what is it that is troubling you, Margaret? I know you have something upon your mind."

"Indeed I have not."

"Oh, but, my dear, I can see," persisted Mrs. Winnington. "I am sure that there is something."

"No; at least, nothing of any importance. I was rather astonished this morning to hear that Tom Stanniforth had arrived at Broom Leas last night, that is all."

"*What!*" cried Mrs. Winnington, who, however prepared she might have been to throw Mr. Stanniforth over if it should seem expedient to do so, had no idea of being thrown over by him; "do you mean to say that he is actually staying in the house, and never told you he was coming? Oh, I simply can't believe it!"

"I met Nellie at church this morning, and she told me," Margaret said. "I was a little annoyed about it, because I cannot understand why Tom should not have come to this house if he wanted to be in these parts at all; and also because—well, because, for many reasons, I think it is a pity that he should have come at this particular time. But Nellie says his appearance was quite unexpected. Her father gave him a sort of general invitation when he was here before, and yesterday they got a telegram from him in the morning, saying that he would arrive in time for dinner, unless he heard from them to the contrary."

"Upon my word!" exclaimed Mrs. Winnington. And, after a short pause—"Now I don't want to triumph over you, dear Margaret; I detest people who are for ever saying 'I told you so,' and I never do it myself. Still, I can't help just reminding you—what did I always tell you about that man?"

"I don't remember. Nothing that was not in his favour, I am sure. I thought you had such a very high opinion of Tom."

"No, no; I don't mean him; I mean that Brune man. I am very seldom deceived in a face, and there is a look of slyness about his which has repelled me from the first. I warned you that he was not to be

trusted, and now you see! As for the girl, she has been setting her cap at Mr. Stanniforth all along. I saw it plainly enough, but it really did not seem worth while to take any notice of it, particularly as I suspected that it was almost as much a desire to spite me as to catch him that was at the bottom of her behaviour. And now their telegraphing off for him on the very day of my return puts it beyond a doubt. Oh, yes, my dear Margaret, I know what you would say. You are so innocent yourself that you fancy everybody else must be like you; but you don't know the world, my dear, and you never will. Well, I confess I am astonished. Ingratitude one expects; but a deliberate, coarse insult!—for this is nothing less—to me there is something more shocking, more repulsive in vulgar-mindedness, than in any mere external vulgarity.”

Margaret did not smile, even inwardly. If her mother was vulgar-minded, she was unaware of the fact, or at all events was able to shut her eyes to it. She felt it incumbent upon her, however, to exonerate the Bruness from the charge brought against them, explaining that Nellie positively disliked Tom Stanniforth, and had gone rather out of her way to show that she did so.

“Oh, my dear child, what a stale old trick! I should not have thought that that pretence of a little aversion could have taken in even you. I don't for a moment suppose that the girl has a chance of success, but it is sickening to think that any one can behave in that way. Poor Mr. Stanniforth! don't you think it would be as well to ask him to come on here when he gets away from those people?”

“I would rather not,” answered Margaret slowly. “And, besides, I doubt whether he could come. Nellie said he was only able to run down for a day or two, and that his object was to see their harvest home. I suppose they don't have harvest homes in the neighbourhood of Manchester.”

“Harvest home!” The depth of Mrs. Winnington's scorn was not to be expressed in words. “Of course,” said she, “we shall be expected to attend this rustic festivity.”

“I was thinking that perhaps we might make some excuse.”

“Not for the world! They would think we were offended, which is the very last thing one would wish them to imagine. No! you may do as you like; but I shall be there.”

And in the ring of Mrs. Winnington's voice, as she announced this decision, there seemed ample promise that she would not be there for nothing.

Nevertheless, when the time came, she showed herself under no aggressive aspect, and advanced to the attack with a great deal of affectionate sprightliness. She herself would have said that she was too well-bred to behave otherwise; but the truth was that she felt no serious alarm, and thoroughly despised her enemy. She was a woman of very limited perceptions, and could never really believe that there were people in the world whose tastes and opinions differed from her own. When

she encountered any such, she usually set them down as mad or dishonest. Now, Mr. Stanniforth being neither the one nor the other, it was impossible that he should entangle himself with Nellie Brune—a person in whom Mrs. Winnington could see but little to admire—when so beautiful and charming a girl as Edith might be his for the asking. Consequently there was no cause for agitation. The Bruness, to be sure, had been guilty of gross insolence, and should be duly chastised for it at a fitting opportunity; but this was only a matter of detail.

The Longbourne party walked over to Broom Leas late in the afternoon, and found Mr. Stanniforth clad in white flannels and playing a vigorous game of lawn-tennis with Walter and two younger members of the Brune family, while Nellie and her father looked on. After the usual greetings had been exchanged, and the chances of the rain holding off till night exhaustively discussed, Mrs. Winnington bore down upon the culprit with ponderous playfulness.

“We are very much offended with you; we have a great mind not to speak to you at all. Of course we know that you must have been dreadfully bored when you were in this stagnant neighbourhood before; but we did think that if anything made you wish to return to it, you would have given our house the preference, dull as it is.”

“But I wasn’t asked,” answered Tom, with a side glance at Margaret, whose eyes were resolutely fixed upon a noisy flight of rooks overhead.

“Oh, Mr. Stanniforth, I am afraid that will never do! you must really find some more plausible excuse than that. Margaret, dear, I am telling this very uncivil brother-in-law of yours that we shall certainly not forgive him unless he promises to come to us next week, and stay until he is told to go away. She won’t listen to me. Do you know, Mr. Stanniforth, I really believe she is a little offended. Of course I was only in fun; but, joking apart, I think dear Margaret is the least bit in the world hurt. She is very sensitive, and you know there are not many people whom she is strongly attached to. Do you think it was quite kind to come down and stay with comparative strangers, and not even to let her know that you would be here?”

Mrs. Winnington had stationed herself in the middle of the tennis-court, and had broken up the game; a circumstance which had perhaps escaped her notice, but which would not in any case have struck her as being worthy of attention. The two boys had strolled away towards the farmyard, grumbling under their breath. Walter was talking eagerly to Edith, whose colour was coming and going, and whose countenance wore that half-frightened, half-pleased expression which Hugh Kenyon had seen and understood long before. Philip had joined Mr. Brune and Nellie, and was making them laugh—doubtless at the expense of some one near at hand.

Margaret, standing alone, and marking the distribution of the groups, sighed softly, and then was seized with a sudden spasm of silent laughter.

There was going to be trouble, she thought; trouble which, when it came, would be of a somewhat serious kind, and would create a lasting breach between some of those who were now conversing together so amicably. This was sad; still it was impossible not to perceive the humorous aspect of the situation. Who could see, without a smile, four blind men hurrying from the four points of the compass towards the same spot? One might sincerely grieve for them after the crash had come, when they had knocked their four poor skulls together, and were reeling backwards with groans and mutual recriminations; but the approach, at least, of the catastrophe must inevitably be comical. Margaret, whose eyes were now open, could afford to laugh at the blind; though, to be sure, it was not so very long since she herself had been one of them. She had intended to give her mother a hint of the possible state of affairs as regarded Walter and Edith; she had intended also, at one time, to speak a few friendly words to Walter himself on the same subject, but her courage had failed her in both instances; and, for that matter, it is doubtful whether she would have done any good by hastening the crisis which nothing could have warded off. Now that her own vision was so clear, she saw, or thought she saw, rather more than Edith's blushes and Walter's absurdly happy young face. For one thing, she saw that Tom Stanniforth was lending a very small part of his attention to the blandishments of his companion, and that his eyes were never once removed from the spot where Nellie stood laughing at Philip's inaudible facetiousness. Was there a clue here, then, to her brother-in-law's sudden and inexplicable interest in harvest homes? Upon the face of it, it seemed in no wise improbable; and it was when observation had carried her thus far that Margaret was overtaken by the disposition towards laughter above mentioned.

"You look amused," said Mr. Brune, who had approached her unnoticed. "If you are thinking of anything likely to raise the spirits of a discouraged farmer, it would be kind to mention it. Three bad harvests in succession, and no hops to speak of! If this sort of thing goes on, you will grace no more harvest homes at Broom Leas with your presence; or at least, if you do, you will have another man for your entertainer."

"Oh, don't say that!" said Margaret; for, circumstances being as they were, the prediction struck her as somewhat ominous. "Whatever may happen, I hope *I*, at all events, may be with you next harvest time, and for many harvest times to come."

Mr. Brune naturally did not follow the drift of her thoughts. "Oh, well," he said, "I dare say I shall manage to keep out of the workhouse for another year or two; but you must allow me the farmer's prescriptive right to grumble, especially on a day of merry-making. By-the-bye, I trust you are prepared to go without dinner to-night, and to sit down to an indigestible supper towards nine o'clock. Poor as one's yield is, it takes a long time to get it in, and I don't suppose the last wagon will enter the gates till after sunset. Then, you know, we shall be in duty

bound to look in upon the men at their supper, and to have our healths drunk and make speeches."

"I don't think we must wait for that," said Margaret. "My mother ought not to stand about in the cold, and it is getting dusk already, and the dew is beginning to fall. Besides, I did not say anything to the servants about not being back for dinner."

The truth was that she was anxious to get away as soon as might be. "If we only can avoid sudden discoveries!" she thought.

"Your mother," said Mr. Brune, "will find a blazing fire in the drawing-room. Suppose we take her in there. The young people will let us know when it is time to come out and join in the shouting."

It was thus that Mrs. Winnington was spared the pain of seeing her daughter and Walter walk slowly down the avenue, side by side, and disappear behind the belt of larches which separated the Broom Leas paddocks from the road. This couple was shortly afterwards followed by another.

"Walter has gone to see them load the last wagon, and Mr. Stanniforth wants to go too," said Nellie. "Are you coming, Philip?"

But Philip, mindful of the old adage as to the relation of odd numbers to company, shook his head, saying that he thought he would go round to the stables and smoke a pipe. He was not exactly jealous of Tom Stanniforth, but he thought that good-natured person a very great bore. Nobody enjoys retiring into the background to make room for others; and Philip perhaps disliked the sensation more than most people. Habit, and encouragement from various quarters, had led him to behave as though, and almost to believe that, he had a special right to Nellie's society. Sooner or later, of course, a day must come when he would have to publicly abrogate that pretension; but in the meantime it was pleasant to play the dog in the manger's part, and disagreeable to be ousted from it. So he strayed rather disconsolately about the stables and strawyard in the grey, chilly twilight, yawning, and saying to himself that he would not be able to stand this sort of thing long, and that he must positively go up to London, set to work with old Steinberger, and begin making some definite plans for the future. These thoughts, together with the saddening influence of the autumn evening, soon brought on one of his periodical fits of depression. He saw that things were going badly with him, and would probably go worse; the luck to which he commonly trusted seemed but a broken reed to lean upon; and finally he fell to wondering whether, if the worst came to the worst, he would ever have the pluck to cut his throat.

He had already fallen to so dismal a depth in the process of self-communion that he was trying, quite ineffectually, to persuade himself that, since suicide was in itself a cowardly action, there could not properly be said to be any cowardice in the fear of committing it, when the slow trampling of heavy hoofs, the creaking of wheels, and the shouting of many voices, told him that the term of his solitude was at hand. These

cheerful sounds came nearer and nearer, and at length there appeared against the pale sky a huge, dark, moving mass, crowned by sundry indistinct human forms. As the team was brought to a standstill a few yards from the spot where Philip stood, other dim figures became visible moving about the gravel drive; Mr. Brune and the two ladies emerged from the house, and the boys at the top of the load struck up a discordant chorus, in which those on *terra firma* joined with a will—

Mr. Brune he's a very good man,
 He treats his 'osses as well as he can;
 We've once turned over and twice stuck fast,
 But we've got his harvest home at last.

This qualified song of triumph, bellowed out in a dialect which it would be difficult to reproduce by means of any wild arrangement of vowels and consonants, was followed by others equally to the point, each verse being received by a somewhat disproportionate amount of hooraying.

Then the wagoner stepped forward, whip in hand, and with much dignity delivered an oration, which, like the speeches of some other persons in a less humble rank of life, started well, but grew unmanageable as it progressed, and would probably never have come to an end at all if, after the first five minutes, some one had not hit upon the expedient of trying a little more hooraying. Mr. Brune made a brief response; and with that the proceedings, so far as Philip and the ladies from Longbourne were concerned, terminated.

Mrs. Winnington was quite clear and decisive about returning home in time for dinner. She had accomplished the object of her visit; the ways and habits of rustics did not interest her at all, and to sit down to cold supper was what she could not contemplate without shuddering. She therefore expressed herself much gratified with the ceremony which she had witnessed, and prepared for departure.

"Now what has become of these young people?" she asked, peering out into the darkness. "Edith dear, are you there?"

"I am here, mamma," answered Edith, appearing at her mother's elbow, escorted by a tall and manly form.

"Oh! Well, I am afraid we must be going, much as I should have liked to remain a little longer. Dear Margaret is feeling rather tired. Good night, Mr. Stanniforth. I suppose we may shake hands again now that we have made up our quarrel," she added, extending her hand to Walter, who grasped it cordially, and remarked—

"Always glad to shake hands with you, Mrs. Winnington, though I'm not Stanniforth."

"Oh! it's you, is it?" said Mrs. Winnington, with a perceptible change of tone; "I didn't see. Where is Mr. Stanniforth, then?"

"Upon my word, I can't tell you. He and Nellie were walking together—where was it? Now I come to think of it, I don't believe I have seen them since we left the field. Perhaps they are there yet." }

"What? Then it is high time that somebody went to look for them, I should think," said Mrs. Winnington severely.

Despite his own ill-humour, this opening was more than Philip could withstand. "Don't spoil sport," he whispered; "do you mean to say you haven't noticed that the millionaire is desperately smitten?"

"Smitten? What do you mean?" returned the agitated lady, rising most satisfactorily. "I have noticed nothing of the sort—there is nothing of the sort. You are always imagining something abominable—improbable. Edith, my dear, you are coughing. And I told you so particularly not to walk on the damp grass in your thin boots."

"But indeed it is not at all damp," pleaded Edith tremulously.

"Now, my dear child, what is the use of your saying that? You are positively drenched. If you have caught cold I shall be more than annoyed."

"I told her she oughtn't to stand about," put in Walter.

"Then why did you keep her out of doors?" retorted Mrs. Winnington very snappishly. "Come, Edith, you must walk home briskly."

Edith meekly obeyed; and Walter, as he stood at the door, listening to their retreating footsteps, heard the careful mother's voice raised to scolding pitch the whole way down the avenue.

Stanniforth and Nellie heard her too. They were not so very far off, after all, having only strolled down to the end of the paddock to see the moon rise. The sky, it was true, was overcast, and the almanack would have informed them that there would be no moon until after midnight; but perhaps they had omitted to consult the almanack. It would be hard to say exactly why neither of them spoke or moved when the departing visitors passed within a few yards of them. First came Mrs. Stanniforth and Marescalchi, walking quickly and in silence; Mrs. Winnington, breathless but eloquent, followed at a slower pace.

"Be so good as not to contradict me, Edith. You never pay the smallest attention to what I tell you; but at least you might listen when I am speaking. How can you possibly tell whether you have caught cold or not? I say that you have; and you know what an object you are when you have a cold in your head; besides which, there is always the risk of inflammation of the lungs, and you are all of you consumptive really. However, that is not what I mind. Now don't interrupt, please; you know very well what I mean;—that is not the *only* thing that I mind. When you were younger, your running wild with these young Brunes did not so much matter; but you ought to have the sense to see that it is both silly and unladylike to keep up that sort of thing now. Mind it does not happen again. Now don't interrupt, Edith, because"—&c. &c.

When distance had softened down this homily into a mere angry buzzing, the listeners had a little laugh.

"Poor things!" sighed Mr. Stanniforth compassionately.

"Poor things! whom do you mean?" asked Nellie. "Poor Edith, if you like."

"Oh, I'm sorry for them both. The girl has the worst of it now, I grant you; but the tables are sure to be turned sooner or later, and I can imagine that it must be very aggravating to be listened to in absolute silence, when you want to be contradicted and have a good row and have done with it. Mrs. Winnington isn't a bad old woman, you know, as old women go."

"I should be sorry to think that there were many like her," said Nellie.

"Oh, I don't know; I have met worse. I was talking to her for some time this afternoon, and really I was rather pleased with some things that she said. She showed a good deal more feeling than I should have expected."

"Feeling? What about?"

"Well—about vivisection, if you must know," answered Tom with a conscious laugh; "but she wasn't humbugging me; at least I don't think she was. I will say that for Mrs. Winnington, that she isn't a humbug. Worldly, of course, but honestly worldly, which is something."

"I wish I were as charitable as you are," said Nellie rather wistfully; "it must be a very pleasant sort of sensation to like everybody. The only drawback is that you can hardly be able to care for any individual very much."

"I assure you you are mistaken," cried Tom eagerly.

"Am I?"

Nellie had it upon the tip of her tongue to ask him whether he liked Edith very much, for she was rather curious to hear what his answer would be. But, upon the whole, she thought better of this and held her peace.

"Shall we go back to the house now?" she asked presently. And, without waiting for a reply, she walked swiftly back across the grass, he following her in a meditative mood.





"THAT IS JUST WHAT YOU DID NOT DO."

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No New Thing.

CHAPTER XIV.

PHILIP IN A NEW PART.



F Mrs. Winnington and her youngest daughter had a disagreeable walk home, owing to the absolute lack of any sympathy between them, the couple who preceded them across the wet grass and through the chilly mists of the autumn evening were in no such evil case, and found mutual solace for the troubles of life in one another's companionship. Philip was still in a downcast and chastened frame of mind, and at such times he commonly

felt as though Margaret were the only true friend he had in the world ; while she, perceiving his low spirits, and naturally connecting them with Tom Stanniforth's rather conspicuous attentions to Nellie, was half sorry that he should be in trouble, half glad that it should be the means of moving him towards a more than usually demonstrative affection for herself. The best love of the best women has always something of a maternal character, and everybody knows that a son can pay no greater

compliment to his mother than to make her the recipient of his confidence, whether spoken or unspoken. Margaret did not attempt any specific kind of consolation, being too much in dread of appearing intrusive for that; but she let her boy know, in a general way, that all his emotions, pleasurable and otherwise, were shared by her, and she further soothed him with such delicate forms of flattery as are conveyed for the most part by inference.

This process was so far successful that it had the effect of warming up Philip's self-esteem, which had fallen below freezing-point; and it was but natural that gratitude to so perceptive a benefactress should make him wish to do or say something that should be agreeable to her. So presently he came out with—

"Meg, I think I was in rather too great a hurry to decide on cutting the Bar. I don't in the least believe, you know, that I shall ever do any good as a lawyer; still, as I have put my hand to the plough, I might as well perhaps go on to the end of the first furrow, and if my being called was of no other use, at least it would please you, wouldn't it?"

"Of course it would please me," cried Margaret; "I can't tell you how much it would please me. You know I wouldn't for the world urge you to take up any profession that you disliked; but the fact of being called to the Bar would not commit you to anything, and it might perhaps lead to some appointment that might suit you. And then—you don't mind people saying disagreeable things about you, I dare say."

"Not in the least, so long as I don't hear them."

"But I am weak-minded enough to be made unhappy by them. And you see, I do hear them; I can't help it. You don't know what a satisfaction it will be to me to be able to tell one or two solicitous friends that you have no intention of leading an idle life."

"Poor old Meg!" said Philip with generous compassion for this womanly weakness. "All right, then; that's settled. In two years' time you shall have a photograph of me in my wig and gown with which to confound the sceptical, and in the meantime I shall keep my eyes open, and try to discover some less objectionable way of earning my bread and butter."

Margaret thanked him so warmly that he really felt for the moment that he was performing an act of self-sacrifice, and could not find it in his heart to inform her of his actual projects, as he had been very nearly doing five minutes before. Why vex her needlessly? he thought. It was not to be expected that she would relish the idea of seeing him behind the footlights of the opera; and it was so pleasant to be patted on the back and told what a good, kind fellow he was. He began to think that he *was* rather good and kind—quite as much so, at all events, as circumstances would allow him to be; and, by way of showing how thoroughly in earnest he was, he declared that he would go up to London and "set to work" no later than the very next morning.

Margaret was a little taken aback by this precipitancy; the more so as she recollected that the Michaelmas Term did not begin until the month of November. But that circumstance need not stand in the way of private study, she reflected, and perhaps it was best to strike while the iron was hot. One thing, however, she felt impelled to say:—

“I hope, dear, you are not hurrying away for any particular reason.”

“Particular reason?” repeated Philip; and it was well that the darkness hid his alarmed face.

“I mean, you mustn't jump to conclusions. Tom Stanniforth is the Bruness' guest, you see, and they must be civil to him. I suspect that, if the truth were known, you would find that Nellie is very anxious for his visit to come to an end.”

Philip burst into a great laugh of relief. “So you thought I was going off in a fit of jealousy! Now, Meg, I do think you might have known me better. Am I ever jealous? Do I ever covet my neighbour's house, or his wife, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is his? There is only one person in the world about whom I have ever felt jealous, and that is yourself. There used to be a time when I was horribly afraid that you would end by marrying the trusty Kenyon.”

“Then,” said Margaret, who now, in her turn, had reason to be grateful to the darkness—“we are quits; for you might have known me better than to think that of me.”

Philip left Longbourne, the following morning, in a condition of comfortable self-approval, and no presentiment of the circumstances under which he was next to see the old place occurred to cast a gloom over his excellent spirits.

“Where shall I write to you?” Margaret asked, as he climbed into the dog-cart that was to take him to the station.

“Oh! the Club, as usual,” he answered.

He had never been in the habit of giving any other address than this, and, since he had become the tenant of Coomassie Villa, had often blessed the lucky chance which had preserved him from a less cautious custom. Margaret knew that he sometimes went to an hotel, sometimes to rooms, and had not cared to ask for more precise information upon the subject.

Now although there was no particular reason of the kind that Mrs. Stanniforth had imagined to hasten Philip's departure, there was an approaching event which rendered his presence in London at this juncture, if not essential, at least desirable and becoming. On his arrival at Coomassie Villa he found Mrs. Webber (the Aunt Keziah to whom it may be remembered Mrs. Marescalchi had once made reference as the sole representative of her kith and kin) in temporary possession of the house, and exactly twenty-four hours later a very diminutive gentleman was added to the list of Fanny's near relations.

It seems possible that readers may not, up to the present point, have become greatly enamoured of Philip Marescalchi, and perhaps—with a

view towards raising him in the estimation of an important section of them—it may be well here to state that he proved himself a father of the most unexceptionable description. To the ordinary male mind an infant, both as regards its aspect and its habits, is a somewhat repulsive little creature. It has none of the soft prettinesses which belong to the young of the lower animals; it is both exacting and ungrateful; and the utter helplessness which is supposed to endear it in a special degree to one of its parents seldom arouses a corresponding sentiment in the breast of the other. Philip, however, was an exception to the general rule. From the first he manifested an immense interest in and affection for his baby, which was indeed an unobjectionable specimen of its kind, being neither red nor uproarious, but a tiny, waxen-faced thing which passed the best part of its days and nights in profound slumber. He purchased for it a cradle so lovely that Mrs. Webber threw up her hands in mingled admiration and dismay at the sight of it; and beside this expensive toy he would sit contentedly hour after hour, endeavouring by means of various expedients to attract the attention of its inmate, who would occasionally reward his efforts with a tipsy sort of smile.

Most ladies will be disposed to think that there must have been some good in a man who could so conduct himself; and it is possible that they may be right. Philip himself was a good deal puzzled and diverted by his own state of mind, and would often laugh gently at himself with that good-humoured indulgence which was his normal attitude in moments of introspection. He had no idea of shaping any particular course in life for himself, or of steering by the light of any fixed principle or set of principles; he liked to let things happen to him, and to watch the results; and when these took unexpected forms, as they often did, he was interested, and sometimes greatly tickled. This experience of family life and paternity had for him the charm of novelty mingled with a certain spice of unreality. He never forgot that he could escape from it all whenever it might please him to do so, and return to practical bachelorhood and the society of his equals, and in that knowledge lay, perhaps, the explanation of the fact that he was quite satisfied to remain where he was. And he was really fond of poor little Fanny, who was recovering very slowly, and upon whom feebleness and her newly-acquired matronly dignity had exercised a softening and refining influence. After a time, when she was able to leave the house, Philip used to hire an open fly, and take her out for drives, through miry lanes and byways, into the country, where they were as secure from recognition as in the heart of Central Africa, and where creeping mists, and falling leaves, and the pale light of watery sunsets affected her simple happiness with no chilly warning of change. Long afterwards Philip sometimes looked back upon those days with an aching feeling at his heart and a sigh over "circumstances," which he has always blamed, and always will blame, for the various misfortunes that have fallen to his lot.

Fanny's love and admiration for her husband knew no bounds. She was firmly convinced, and would frequently declare, that there was no one like him in the world—no one so kind, so unselfish, so uncomplaining. "And to think of him living like this, after what he's been accustomed to!" Fanny would exclaim, with tears in her eyes. In truth, Coomassie Villa, owing to the disorganised state of the household, was by no means a comfortable place of residence at this time; and if there had not been a good deal of amiability in Philip's composition, he would hardly have been able to tolerate Mrs. Webber, who had taken upon herself the functions of nurse, and who occasionally showed herself to be a very unpleasant old person indeed.

Mrs. Webber, unfortunately, was not an Oxfordshire rustic, who might have been overawed by Mr. Marescalchi's gentility, but a shrewd woman, London born and London bred, whose husband kept a public-house in Islington, and whose views of life and humanity were of the coarser and more practical kind. She had never approved of Fanny's escapade, and did not disguise her opinion that her niece's husband was "a slippery one."

"When are you a-going to come forward, like a honest man, and let this poor child have his rights?" she asked, making a sudden descent upon Philip one afternoon when he was sitting alone in the dreary little drawing-room, and tossing the baby with a series of violent upward jerks while she spoke. She was a tall, stout woman with sharp, black eyes and grizzled corkscrew curls, and she put her question in a determined manner.

"His rights? Well, really, Mrs. Webber, I think that at the present moment he may fairly claim it as one of his rights that he should not be made sick, as he certainly will be, if you go on hurling him into the air as you are doing much longer. You can't mean to tell me that any human being, of however tender years, can *like* that mode of treatment."

"Don't you be imperent, young man. I haven't brought up ten children of my own, nor yet I haven't left my comfortable home and come here to do servant's work, for you to teach me what babies like and what they don't like."

"Mrs. Webber, I feel that we have acted most selfishly in keeping you so long. Let us lose no time in engaging a nurse and restoring you to your neglected family."

"Hah! make use of me so long as I'm wanted, and then show me the door—that's it, is it? But I'd have you to know, Philip, that I'm not one as can be treated that way. Are you a-going to do your dooty by my niece? Are you a-going to love, honour, and cherish her as your wife, and introduce her as such to your relations? For that is what you've swore to do at the altar, mind you."

"It may be so; but I do not recollect that clause in the marriage service. In any case, the matter is one between Fanny and me, and, highly as I respect you, Mrs. Webber, I don't intend to discuss it with you."

"There's two must give their word to that bargain," cried Mrs. Webber, with a defiant toss of her head and of the long-suffering baby. Now, listen to me, Philip; I don't want to have no trouble; let's sit down and talk over things quiet, as between friends."

"Mrs. Webber, I am sorry to interrupt you, and it grieves me to say anything of a nature to hurt your feelings; but there is a trifling matter which I think it best to mention to you before we go any further. Twice within the last five minutes you have addressed me as 'Philip.' Don't do it again, please; I don't like it."

The effect of this mild remonstrance was very remarkable. Mrs. Webber sank down upon the nearest chair, dropped the baby upon her knees, and began to cry.

"Never did I think to be so spoke to in this house! Not to be allowed to call my own niece's husband by his name! Well, this *is* unkind!" she ejaculated between her sobs.

Philip was immensely delighted. He found himself the richer by a new experience, and mentally noted it down under the heading of "How to deal with the lower classes." Finding he was master of the situation, he proceeded, in accordance with the rules of war, to follow up his advantage and trample upon the fallen.

"My good woman, your intentions may be excellent; but you are meddling with matters which are too high for you. I may in time succeed in raising my wife to my own rank in society; but the process must be taken in hand slowly and delicately. As for her relations, I haven't married them, and it will be altogether out of the question, I am afraid, that we should receive them upon terms of intimacy."

This was rather overshooting the mark. Mrs. Webber raised her head, and snorted wrathfully.

"Intimacy, indeed!" quoth she. "Wait till you are asked for your intimacy. I don't want it, nor never did. I want my niece's rights. I'm standing up for them as won't stand up for theirselves."

But at this juncture Marescalchi junior intervened appositely with a long-repressed howl, and had to be carried upstairs.

Philip, left in possession of the field of battle, stretched out his legs, whistled, sighed, and made a dismal grimace. He was not afraid of Mrs. Webber compromising his future in any very serious manner; but she certainly had it in her power to cause him much intermittent trouble and worry; and that was almost as bad. He could not help thinking how much better it would have been if he had married Nellie Brune, and how much—how very much better—if he had not married at all. Then he got up, shook himself, and walked away in the rain to his club, where, chancing to meet an acquaintance who was passing through town, he soon forgot all his sorrows in a game of pyramids.

In the month of October Herr Steinberger returned to London; and Philip lost no time in placing himself in the hands of that competent professor. Steinberger, this time, was complimentary, and more en-

couraging than he had been upon the occasion of Philip's first visit to him.

"You have a goot ear," he was pleased to say; "and the voice—well, the voice is goot too; but you have not learnt to get him out. What for you want to go upon the stage, eh? That is no business of mine, you say."

"I don't say so at all," answered Philip, laughing, "and I am quite willing to tell you. I want to make money."

"Ah—so! It is no caprice, then. To make money?—well, that might be. At concerts, yes; upon the stage—perhaps." He thought for a moment, and then said: "I will undertake you, if you choose; but only upon the condition that you work hardt, and that you sing not anywhere in public until I gif you leaf. When you break one of these rules I make you my bow and wish you goot morning. Is that agreedt?"

Philip consented willingly, and was then admitted as one of Herr Steinberger's pupils upon terms much more moderate than the great man was in the habit of exacting from fashionable amateurs. For several weeks the new pupil worked as hard as could have been desired, and, finding that he made perceptible progress, enjoyed his work thoroughly. For in art of all kinds it is not *le premier pas qui coûte*; it is the weary second and third steps, when enough has been learnt to show how many more must be taken before proficiency can be reached, that discourage the faint-hearted and the indolent. To Philip, who was of an essentially sanguine temperament, success seemed not only certain, but close at hand, and he was proportionately joyous.

At Coomassie Villa, too, things were going pleasantly and cheerfully at this time. Aunt Keziah had not yet returned to native Islington; it being essential, as she said, that she should remain for a week or so, in order to watch the proceedings of the nurse, to whom she had resigned the care of the precious baby; but she kept herself much in the background, called Philip "Sir" when she spoke to him, and was to all appearance disposed to accept the situation in the spirit of a sensible woman. Philip was so much pleased by this change of demeanour that, on the day before that fixed for her departure, he went out and bought her a massive gold bracelet, which peace-offering she accepted with many expressions of humble gratitude. It presently appeared, however, that she had not yet said her last word.

"Before I bid you good-night, sir," said she, that same evening, "I should be glad to have an answer to the question I made so bold as to arst you three weeks ago."

"My dear Mrs. Webber, I thought I had given you an answer at the time."

"You'll escuse me, sir, but that is just what you did not do. And a answer I am respectfully determined for to have."

"Oh, Aunt Keziah, *please!*"—pleaded Fanny, who was lying on the sofa, and who had become very pink during this speech.

"Now, my dear, don't you worrit yourself. I know my dooty, and your husband will see his, if it's put to him plain. For close upon a year I've held my tongue; but the time has come now for him to acknowledge you before the world, and I mean he shall do it too."

Philip shrugged his shoulders wearily. "My good Mrs. Webber, what is the use of your bothering me in this way? I told you before that I must decline to discuss the subject with you."

"Very well, sir; then you will drive me to take measures which it goes against me to take them. To-morrow I write to Mrs. Stanniforth, and I tell her the whole truth. I have her address, you see, sir," added Mrs. Webber, holding up an envelope which Philip recognised.

"Oho! so you've been reading my letters," said he.

"A speech which no gentleman would make," returned Mrs. Webber, with awful calmness. "No, sir; I have not read your letters, nor wouldn't so bemean myself if it was ever so. But a henvelope is what all the world may look at." And indeed the envelope in question bore the words Longbourne, Crayminster, in sufficiently large capitals.

Philip had thought it wisest to shroud the whereabouts of his home in mystery, but, with his usual carelessness about matters of detail, had left clear evidence upon the subject on his dressing-table.

"I suppose you know," he remarked, "that there is nothing to prevent Mrs. Stanniforth from cutting me off with a shilling whenever she pleases."

"I don't think, sir," answered Mrs. Webber, smiling, "that she will do that."

"Well, no; candidly speaking, I don't think she will. She has a weakness for a certain worthless individual, and upon that you appear to have calculated. I may as well tell you, though, that between forgiving me and receiving my wife there is a vast difference. Mrs. Stanniforth, you must know, has a mother who lives with her—an old lady of whom you remind me in many respects, Mrs. Webber. She is quite as stupid as you are, quite as obstinate, and thinks herself quite as sharp. As a bully, she beats you. Make her your enemy, and you might as well try to get Fanny into heaven as inside the doors of Longbourne, so long as she remains there; and she will remain there, I take it, until she dies. Now, Mrs. Webber, I'll be perfectly frank with you. Your writing to Mrs. Stanniforth, as you propose, would give me about as much pain as anything could do. Mrs. Stanniforth is in a good deal of trouble just now, owing to various things that have occurred—that very letter which you are stroking your nose with was written a few days ago to tell me about them—and if this blow comes upon her as an addition to them, I believe it will very nearly break her heart. That would distress me, and wouldn't do you an atom of good. You probably know enough of your sex to be aware that she would set you down as an interested old schemer, and Fanny, at best, as a willing instrument in your hands. I grant you that she and her mother will have to make the best of what

they will consider a bad business in the long run ; but, if you will let me manage things in my own way, they may eventually consent to take Fanny by the hand ; whereas, if you precipitate matters, the chances are that they will refuse to hear her name mentioned, and will use their influence to get me into the Australian police, or something of that kind. Now you can do as you like."

"Maybe you are speaking the truth," said Mrs. Webber. "Lord knows whether you are or not ; but what you say sounds like sense. I shan't interfere without you drive me to it," she continued, after taking counsel with herself for a minute or two ; "but mind this : if ever you take it into your head to desert my niece ——"

"Aunt Keziah," cried Fanny, starting up from her couch with her cheeks aflame, "I won't sit here and let you talk so ! How can you say such wicked things ! You don't understand my Philip one bit." And she threw her arms round her Philip's neck protectingly.

He disengaged himself gently, saying, "Lie down again, Fan, and don't agitate yourself. Imitate me : you see I am not agitated. Your Aunt Keziah takes a low view of human nature ; which is to be regretted for everybody's sake, and especially for her own. Try, my dear Mrs. Webber, to rise to a higher moral level, and bear in mind that, as Fanny justly remarks, you don't understand me one bit. That thought may make you easier at times when you are inclined to suspect me of being a consummate villain. Besides, you have got the address, you know."

"Yes ; I've got the address," said Mrs. Webber, slapping the pocket into which she had thrust Mrs. Stanniforth's envelope.

"So that you will always have it in your power to throw the fat in the fire. That reflection also is likely to be a comfort to you. And now, as there seems to be nothing more to be said, suppose we have some of that mulled claret which you brew so admirably, and drink the baby's health."

Thus Philip glided lightly away from a peril which had frightened him more than might have been supposed from his manner of treating it.

CHAPTER XV.

MRS. WINNINGTON RECEIVES A SHOCK.

DURING the weeks which Philip had spent agreeably in perfecting himself in the parts of husband, father, and vocalist, time had not stood still at Longbourne. The period, indeed, had been an unusually exciting one in the history of that small world, and had brought about rebellions, battles, conferences, and treaties, all of which must now be in due course recorded.

Mrs. Winnington, whom we left administering a well-deserved lecture to her youngest daughter, was so little relieved by that exercise, and so much put out by the various incidents of the afternoon, that her

temper entered upon one of its worst and gloomiest phases ; and even the sudden retirement of Marescalchi, which at ordinary times would have given her great satisfaction, drew nothing more from her than a passing expression of her utter disbelief in his purpose of working either at law or at anything else. Nor did she at all enjoy being left in a great, silent house, with no one to speak to except her two daughters, neither of whom happened to be a person with whom it was possible to pick a quarrel. From sheer lack of a more worthy antagonist, she fell foul of Mrs. Prosser upon some point of domestic economy, and was routed with great loss ; after which, to Margaret's infinite distress, she took to her bed for twenty-four hours, and sent for the doctor, who unfeelingly ordered her to get up forthwith and go out of doors.

Tom Stanniforth, as in duty bound, walked up, after a day or two, to call upon his sister-in-law ; but, as ill luck would have it, Mrs. Winnington and Edith had selected that very afternoon to pay a round of visits, and consequently missed him. The elder lady's disgust at this *contretemps* was not lessened by the news that Mr. Stanniforth had been persuaded to remain on a few days longer with the Bruness. She still persisted in declaring to herself, as well as to Margaret, that his visit, whether long or short, could have no very serious consequences ; still, having nothing else to think about, she allowed herself to brood over the subject until it became a torment to her, and at last—being a woman to whom inaction was unbearable—she made up her mind to go over to Broom Leas and speak a few words “in a friendly way” to Mr. Brune. The words that had hitherto passed between her and that gentleman had not commonly been very friendly ones, nor was her feeling towards him of a very friendly nature ; but that, as she pointed out to Margaret, who ventured upon a mild protest against her resolution, “was not the question.” Accordingly, she requested the use of a carriage for the afternoon, and drove over to Broom Leas in state, not knowing very well, perhaps, what she was going to say when she got there, but feeling that at least it would be a satisfaction to her to be upon the spot.

That it is always well to be “upon the spot” was a maxim which had been frequently in Mrs. Winnington's mouth in the course of a very fairly successful career ; and in truth it was doubtful whether, if she had not been so palpably and unflinchingly upon the spot, in Whitehall and elsewhere, at certain times, her sons would have got on as well in their several professions as they have done.

Mrs. Winnington was by way of being short-sighted ; but her eyes were capable of doing a good stroke of work when any sudden demand was made upon them ; and it so chanced that, as the victoria in which she was seated turned briskly in at the gates of Broom Leas, she distinctly saw a manly form which was familiar to her standing at the entrance of the farmyard in close proximity to a small and girlish one which she also recognised without difficulty. She saw more than this, for she saw that she was seen ; and she saw worse, for she saw Mr.

Stanniforth, in the most barefaced manner, walk away and conceal himself behind an adjacent rick. Nellie came forward, and met her visitor at the front door.

"How do you do?" says Mrs. Winnington, alighting slowly, and favouring Miss Brune with a full view of the lowered eyelids and faint smile which with her were the outward and visible signs of an inward and heartfelt superiority. "Is your father anywhere about?"

"Impudent old woman!" thought Nellie; "what does she mean by speaking to me as if she had come to buy butter and eggs?" She said aloud, "Won't you come in, Mrs. Winnington? I don't know where my father is; but he went out with his gun some time ago, and I hardly expect him back before dark. Do you want to see him about anything in particular?"

"Oh, no," answered Mrs. Winnington; "nothing very particular. If he had been in, I should have liked to ask him whether he had heard anything about the *Octopus* being ordered to the West African station. You know my son has just been appointed to her as first lieutenant, and I understood that one of your brothers had also joined her lately."

"The West African station!" exclaimed Nellie in consternation; "oh, I do hope not! No, I am sure we had heard nothing of the kind. When Harry wrote, he said they were to join the Channel fleet."

"Perhaps it is not true," said Mrs. Winnington, who had in fact invented this pretext for her call upon the spur of the moment; "there are always so many absurd rumours going about. As you have heard nothing, it probably is not true. No, I won't go in, thank you; but, since I am here, I will just take a turn round the garden with you, my dear, if you can spare me a few minutes. I should be rather glad of the opportunity of saying something to you which—which, in fact, I think you ought to be told."

Nellie opened her eyes rather wide. Never before had she been called "my dear" by Mrs. Winnington, and her imagination failed to suggest to her any clue to the significance of this portent.

"How neat and tidy your lawn always is!" said Mrs. Winnington graciously. "That is the advantage of a small garden. Now at Longbourne we find that it is next to impossible to keep the grounds in decent order at this time of year. The mere sweeping up of the leaves takes three men all their time from morning to night."

"They must be three very lazy men," remarked Nellie, who knew as well as anybody how much could be accomplished in a fair day's work. She could not refrain from adding, "There is very nearly as much turf here as at Longbourne."

"You don't say so! Well, I'm sure your gardener deserves every credit. And I notice that you always manage to have a few flowers, too, to make the place look bright. But perhaps Mr. Brune takes an interest in flowers. One so often sees the garden quite neglected in houses where there is no mistress; and that is such a pity."

"There is a mistress in this house," said Nellie shortly.

"To be sure there is, my dear," rejoined Mrs. Winnington, patting her on the shoulder quite affectionately; "but she is a very young mistress, and not a very experienced one. I ought not, perhaps, to have used the word mistress; I was thinking rather of houses where there is no *mother*."

"As far as gardening goes, I don't see why there being no mother should make any great difference," observed Nellie. ("What in the world is she driving at? I hope she'll come to the point before I lose my temper and say something rude.")

Mrs. Winnington had her point quite clearly before her eyes, and, having executed these cumbrous preliminary circlings in the air, was now ready to swoop down upon it.

"As far as gardening goes!" she said. "But, unfortunately, there are many other ways in which the loss of a mother is an irreparable one." Nellie thought that, in the case of some people whom she knew, there might be considerations which would go far towards mitigating the bereavement alluded to; but she had the self-restraint to abstain from saying this: and Mrs. Winnington proceeded.

"I am so averse to anything that might have the appearance of meddling that I generally prefer to remain silent, even when I feel that a word in season might be of real service; but the question is whether that motive for silence is not really a wrong and selfish one—whether one ought not to think only of doing one's duty to one's neighbours—to point out to people when they make themselves ridiculous."

"As you would they should do unto you," put in Nellie, whose patience was fast ebbing away. "If you don't mind my telling you in what way you seem to me ridiculous, Mrs. Winnington, I can't object to letting you do as much for me."

"My dear, you must remember the difference in our ages. It would be hardly becoming in you to call me ridiculous, even if I were so; and that is just one of those things which a mother would enable you to see."

"I suppose it would be no use to try and stop you, Mrs. Winnington, but I may as well tell you beforehand that, so long as my father does not consider me ridiculous, I shall not trouble myself in the least about what you, or anybody else, may happen to think of me."

"Ah!" said Mrs. Winnington, "that is just the spirit in which I expected to be met. That is exactly the sort of speech which a motherless girl would be sure to make. You do not understand now, though you will understand some day, that no one can afford to fly in the face of society. In the present instance your father would naturally be the last man in the world to hear what people are saying about you."

"And what are people saying about me?" asked Nellie, stopping short and facing Mrs. Winnington, who, however, continued her slow progress across the lawn.

"Well, I must say that I blame your father a little; it is partly his

fault. When one has a daughter of your age, one cannot be too particular, and he has been, to say the least of it, thoughtless. I should be sorry to hurt your feelings; but it is best to tell the truth, and you know one cannot follow up a rich bachelor in that persistent way without setting people's tongues going. I would not for one moment insinuate that either you or your father knew what you were doing; and as for Mr. Stanniforth, I think I may confidently say on his behalf that he would be very much amused at the idea of his name being coupled with yours. Still the fact remains that he is staying at your house, instead of at Longbourne."

Nellie was too furious to do more than ejaculate "*Oh!*" under her breath.

"Of course," continued her companion benevolently, "it does not matter to *him*; but I know so well what is invariably said in these cases. It is the poor girl who is pitied and laughed at, and——"

"Thank you; that will do," interrupted Nellie, who had now found her tongue. "My friends know perfectly well that I would die rather than marry any one of the name of Stanniforth; and as for other people, it makes no difference to me what they say. It might amuse Mr. Stanniforth to hear his name coupled with mine; but I assure you it would not amuse me at all. Impertinent and false things are said about everybody, I suppose: what I cannot understand is that any one should have the courage to repeat them to the person of whom they are said."

Nellie was quite aware that, having thus delivered herself, she would best consult her self-respect by saying no more; but feminine nature got the better of her, and, after a short and sharp struggle, she added: "You need not be at all alarmed, Mrs. Winnington. Rich as Mr. Stanniforth is, he does not exactly belong to the class into which our family has been accustomed to marry."

"Why, my good girl," cried Mrs. Winnington quite unaffectedly and coarsely, "your mother was only a banker's daughter!"

There was thus a momentary risk of this interview coming to an end in a deplorably vulgar manner; but happily both combatants saw the danger, and controlled themselves. Mrs. Winnington left rather hastily, but without further loss of dignity, and was upon the whole very well satisfied with the afternoon's work. Had this rather dull-witted woman been a female Machiavelli, she could hardly have played her cards more adroitly, or have taken more certain means of gaining her end, than she had done; but, as a matter of fact, no credit for successful diplomacy was due to her upon this occasion. It would never have occurred to her to rescue her intended prey by stirring up Miss Brune's pride, because it would never have occurred to her to suppose that that young lady could have any pride—a luxury in which, according to Mrs. Winnington's notions, only the noble and wealthy could afford to indulge. In speaking as she had done, she had been actuated simply and solely by an amiable wish to make the girl uncomfortable. She had herself been

made somewhat uncomfortable by Stanniforth's walking behind that haystack under her very eyes and by Nellie's virtual participation in this affront; and her desire had been to retaliate without delay, and further to let the young woman understand that, whoever might win or lose the prize, it would assuredly not fall to her share. She flattered herself that she had succeeded in both of these noble aims. As for Miss Brune's indignant repudiation of a possible alliance with any Stanniforth whatever, she took that for what she considered it to be worth. The impertinence of it had made her rather angry for the moment; but, as the thing could obviously have been only said with a view to impertinence, it was hardly worth remembering. The important point was that Mr. Stanniforth was not likely to be pressed to postpone his departure a second time, and that in a day or two he would be restored to his anxious friends at Longbourne. After that, Edith must be made to bestir herself more, and perhaps it might even be well that something in the nature of a conditional engagement should be entered upon before he left. It will be perceived that Mrs. Winnington herself was not overburdened by any foolish pride.

When she reached home she found the drawing-room and library untenanted, Margaret and Edith having, it was to be presumed, gone out for a walk. Now it was a habit of Mrs. Winnington's, whenever she found the house empty, to prowls all over it, peeping into blotting-books, opening drawers, occasionally going so far as to read letters that might be lying handy, and—as Mrs. Prosser, who hated her with a perfect hatred, would say—“poking and rummaging about as any under-housemaid that I caught at such tricks should be dismissed immediate, and no character given.”

It is probable that Mrs. Winnington saw no harm at all in such pokings and rummagings. Her daughters, she would have said, had no secrets from her, or at all events ought not to have any. Nor had she any particular end to serve in entering other people's bedrooms. For some occult reason it gave her pleasure to do so, and the present occasion being favourable for the gratifying of her tastes, she proceeded to profit by it. First she made a thorough examination of all the reception rooms; then she went upstairs, and spent some time in overhauling the contents of Margaret's wardrobe; and then she passed on to the room at that time occupied by Edith, which opened out of a long corridor where the family portraits had hung in the days when the owners of Longbourne had possessed a family to be thus commemorated. This corridor had a peculiarity. It terminated in a small gallery, resembling a theatre-box, or one of those pews which are still to be met with in a few old-fashioned churches, whence you looked down upon a curious apse-like chamber, tacked on to the house by a seventeenth-century Brune for some purpose unknown. It may have been intended to serve as a theatre, or possibly as a private chapel: of late years it had fallen into disuse, being a gloomy and ill-lighted apartment, and was seldom

entered by anybody, except by the housemaids who swept it out from time to time. Some one, however, was in it now. Mrs. Winnington with her hand on the lock of her daughter's door, was startled by the sound of voices arising from that quarter, and it was a matter of course that she should at once make her way along the passage as stealthily as might be, and peer over the edge of the gallery to see what might be going on below.

She arrived in time to witness a scene so [startling that she very nearly put a dramatic finish to it then and there by falling headlong over the balustrade, which was a low one. Upon an ottoman directly beneath her, her daughter Edith was sitting in a very pretty and graceful attitude, her elbow resting on her knee and her face hidden by her right hand, while her left was held by Walter Brune, who was kneeling at her feet. And this is what that audacious young reprobate was saying, in accents which rose towards the roof with perfect distinctness:—

“Now, my darling girl, you must not allow yourself to be so cowed by that awful old mother of yours. There! I beg your pardon: I didn't intend to speak disrespectfully of her, but it came out before I could stop myself. What I mean is, you mustn't let her bully you to that extent that you daren't call your soul your own. Stand up to her boldly, and depend upon it she'll knock under in the long run. When all's said and done, she can't eat you alive.”

The feelings of the astounded listener overhead may be imagined.

“Ah, you don't understand,” sighed Edith. “It is easy enough for a man to talk of standing up for himself; but you don't consider how different it is with us.”

“But I do understand—I do consider,” declared Walter, scrambling up to his feet. “I know it's awfully hard upon you, my dearest; but wouldn't it be harder still to marry some decrepid old lord to please your mother, and to be miserable and ashamed of yourself for the rest of your life?”

At this terrible picture Edith shuddered eloquently.

“So you see it's a choice of evils,” continued the young man. “Some people, I know, would think it was a great misfortune for you that you should have come to care for a poor beggar like me; but I am not going to say that, because I don't believe it is a real misfortune at all. How can it be a misfortune to love the man who loves you better than any one else in the world can possibly do, and who will always love you just the same as long as he lives?” (“Upon my word!” ejaculated Mrs. Winnington inaudibly.)

“Of course,” Walter went on, “we shall have troubles, and probably we shall have to wait a good many years; but we are young, and we can afford to wait, if we must. You won't mind waiting?”

“Oh, no; it is not the waiting that I shall mind,” said Edith faintly.

“And we know that it won't be for ever, and that nothing can make either of us change. When one thinks of that, all the rest seems almost

plain sailing. The first explosion will be the worst part of the business. I shall tell my father to-night."

"Oh, must you?—so soon? What *will* he say?"

"He? Oh, he won't say much, dear old man. I dare say he won't exactly approve just at first; but when he sees that I am in earnest, he'll do what he can to help me. And then, you know, my dear, you'll have to tell your mother."

"Walter, I can't. I really *could not* do it. You have really no idea of what a coward I am. I always lie awake shivering all night before I go to the dentist's; and, indeed, I would rather have all my teeth pulled out, one by one, than tell mamma that I had engaged myself to you."

At this juncture it was only natural that the young lovers should embrace; and if Mrs. Winnington had not been literally stunned and paralysed, she could hardly have maintained her silence any longer in the presence of such a demonstration. As it was, she neither moved nor uttered a word; and presently she heard Edith whisper pleadingly—

"Walter—dear—don't you think we could—mightn't we—keep it secret just a little longer?"

The honest Walter rubbed his ear in perplexity. "Well, of course we *could*; but it would be only a putting off of the evil day, and I should like to feel that we had been perfectly straight with the old—with your mother. Look here; how would it do if I were to break it to her?"

"Oh, that would be a great deal worse! If only there were some means of letting her find it out!"

Hardly had this aspiration been breathed when a hollow groan was heard, proceeding apparently from the upper air. Edith started violently, and clasped her hands.

"Oh!" she shrieked, "what was that? Did you hear it?"

"Yes," answered Walter, who had himself been somewhat startled; "it was nothing; it was only one of the cows outside. What a timid little goose you are!"

"Oh, it was not a cow! No cow ever made such a dreadful sound as that. I am sure this dismal room is haunted—I can't stay here any more." And Edith fled precipitately.

Walter lingered for a moment, looked all round him, looked up at the ceiling, looked everywhere, except at the gallery just over his head, and then hurried away after her.

The cause of all this disturbance was reclining in an arm-chair, fanning herself with her pocket-handkerchief, and feeling by no means sure that she was not about to have a fit.

It is perhaps hardly to be expected that any pity or sympathy should be felt for Mrs. Winnington, who, nevertheless, was a human creature very much like the rest of us—better, possibly, than some, and no worse than a good many others. In the course of the present narrative her failings have necessarily been brought much to the front; but she was

not one of those depraved persons—if indeed there be any such—who deliberately say to Evil, “Be thou my Good.” She was not a religious woman (though she had always paid due respect to the observances of the Church, as beseemed a Bishop’s wife); but neither was she a woman without clear, albeit perverted, notions of duty. That she was a miserable sinner, she was bound, in a general sort of way, to believe; but she certainly did not suppose that her sins were any blacker than those of her neighbours. According to her lights, she had done the best that she could for her daughters, whom she really loved after a certain fashion; and, according to her lights, she intended to continue doing the best she could for them. It is a fact that she thought a great deal more about them than she did about herself. Thus it was that she was every whit as much astonished and pained by what she had witnessed as the most virtuous mother into whose hands this book may chance to fall, would be, were she to discover her own immaculate daughter in the act of embracing—say the parish doctor or the poverty-stricken parish curate.

“I could not have believed it!” moaned poor Mrs. Winnington, as she sat humped up in her arm-chair, with all her majesty of deportment gone out of her. “I could not have believed it possible! Edith, of all people! If it had been Kate, or even Margaret, I could have understood it better—but Edith! Oh, I am crushed!—I shall never get over this.”

She really looked and felt as if she might be going to have a serious attack of illness; but as there was nobody there to be alarmed, or to offer her assistance, she picked herself up after a time, and made her way down the corridor with a slow, dragging step. Being still in her walking dress, she thought she would go out and see what a breath of fresh air would do for her. She did not, however, get further than the front door; for, just as she was about to let herself out, who should run briskly up the steps but Mr. Brune!

“Is that Mrs. Winnington?” said he. “How do you do, Mrs. Winnington? Do you know whether my boy Walter is here? Somebody told me he had gone up to Longbourne, and I rather want to see him; so I thought I would just look—— Why, what’s the matter?” he broke off, for the first time noticing the lady’s woebegone face; “has anything happened?”

“Your son is here,” answered Mrs. Winnington, in a deep, tragic voice worthy of Mrs. Siddons. “Yes, Mr. Brune; something has indeed happened. No, not an accident; don’t jump about, there’s a good man; my nerves are completely unstrung. As we have met, I may as well tell you about it at once. If you are not in a hurry, perhaps you will give me a few minutes in private.”

“By all means, Mrs. Winnington; but hadn’t you better let me get you a glass of wine first? You look quite grey.”

Mrs. Winnington shook her head; but Mr. Brune thought it best to take the law into his own hands, and rang the door-bell. After a glass

of port wine Mrs. Winnington's complexion began slowly to regain its normal florid aspect, and she was able to assume something of her customary stateliness of demeanour in motioning her companion to follow her into a small room on the ground floor which was sometimes used as a study by Philip, and where she could feel tolerably safe from intrusion.

"Now, Mr. Brune," she began, seating herself opposite to him, "I will say at once that I acquit you of all blame in this scandalous business. I feel sure that when you have heard what I have to tell you, you will be as much grieved and horrified as I have been."

"It shall be my endeavour not to disappoint you," answered he.

Mrs. Winnington paused. "I can assure you," she said at length, "that I feel the—the disgrace of all this very keenly. Really I hardly know how to begin."

"Suppose you take a little more wine," suggested Mr. Brune, who had been alarmed for a moment, but who now began to suspect that nothing very terrible was the matter after all.

"No, thank you. It is very disagreeable to have to tell it; but you will understand, of course, that I am speaking to you in the strictest confidence, and I count upon your honour to let what I say go no further."

And then Mrs. Winnington related what had taken place between Walter and Edith in her presence, suppressing nothing, except that interchange of kisses which respect for her daughter forbade her to mention.

"Ah," remarked Mr. Brune coolly, when she had concluded her recital, "I thought something of this kind would probably occur sooner or later."

"You did?" exclaimed Mrs. Winnington, now quite restored to her natural self. "Then I must say, Mr. Brune, that you have been rather—Well, I did *not* expect to hear this!"

"What would you have had me do?" asked her interlocutor, perhaps rather enjoying the discomfiture of this veteran match-maker. "Naturally I am sorry that Walter should have fixed his affections upon a penniless girl, for I cannot by any possibility find him a sufficient income to marry upon; but I never suspected anything until it was much too late for interference to do any good."

This was a view of the case which had not presented itself to Mrs. Winnington. She had expected that Mr. Brune, if he did not make an absolute apology, would at least be apologetic in his manner; and, lo and behold! he was taking up a tone of complete equality. And the worst of it was that she could not very well see how he was to be put to silence; for it was certainly true that Edith was penniless.

"I need not point out to you," she said, smothering her indignation, "that a stop must be put to this immediately."

"I suppose so. I am sorry for the poor boy—and for the poor girl too, for that matter; but we can only hope that they will both get over it."

“Edith undoubtedly will. She is a mere child; she has been led into folly and deceit by one in whom I had unwisely placed implicit trust,” cried Mrs. Winnington, who could not refuse herself the satisfaction of making this rather unjust accusation. “Of course,” she added, “you will at once let your son understand that he is not to hold any sort of communication with her in future, beyond what is necessary in order to avoid exciting remark, and that, as far as possible, he must abstain from going anywhere where he is likely to meet her.”

“I am not sure,” answered Mr. Brune, “that I am prepared to take such authoritative measures as that. Neither you nor I, Mrs. Winnington, desire this match; but, you see, we don’t happen to be the principal persons concerned; and if we can’t be generous, we may at least be just. So far as one can see, there is no likelihood that these young people will ever be able to marry, and, if they ask me my advice, I should recommend them without hesitation to give each other up; but supposing, for the sake of argument, that they chose to exchange promises of fidelity, and to wait for better times, I don’t think that I, for my part, should consider myself justified in forbidding an engagement. You, of course, can do what you think proper; I am only speaking of my own possible action. Walter has been a good son to me, and I shall not cross him in any way that I can help.”

Mrs. Winnington started to her feet in a fury. “I declare, Mr. Brune,” she exclaimed, “I don’t know whether to call you weak or wicked!”

“Call me what you please, my dear lady,” replied Mr. Brune, who had also risen; “or call me both, if you think it would relieve your feelings at all to do so. Vituperation, however, will scarcely help us to arrive at a clearer understanding; and indeed I believe we understand each other quite clearly as it is. So, unless you have anything more of a practical nature to suggest, I shall wish you good evening.”

When he was gone, Mrs. Winnington sank back into her chair which she had just vacated, and raised her clasped hands to heaven.

“Oh,” she exclaimed, “what a world we live in! Everybody is false, everybody is selfish; it makes one feel as if one would never be able to believe in any one but oneself again!”

The amusing part of it is that she was perfectly sincere.

Miss Edgeworth.



EARLY DAYS.

I.

FEW authoresses in these days can have enjoyed the ovations and attentions which seem to have been considered the due of distinguished ladies at the end of the last century and the beginning of this one. To read the accounts of the receptions and compliments which fell to their lot may well fill later and lesser luminaries with envy. Crowds opened to admit them, banquets spread themselves out before them, lights were lighted up and flowers were scattered at their feet. Dukes, editors, prime ministers, waited their convenience on their staircases; whole theatres rose up *en masse* to greet the gifted creators of this and that immortal tragedy. The authoresses themselves, to do them justice, seem to have been very little dazzled by all this excitement. Hannah More contentedly retires with her maiden sisters to the Parnassus on the Mendip Hills, where they sew and chat and make tea and teach the village children. Dear Joanna Baillie, modest and beloved, lives on to peaceful age in her pretty old house at Hampstead, looking through tree-tops and sunshine and clouds towards distant London. "Out there, where all the storms are," I heard the children saying yesterday as they watched the overhanging gloom of smoke which veils the city of metropolitan thunders and lightning. Maria Edgeworth's apparitions as a literary lioness in the rush of London and of Paris society were but interludes in her existence, and her real life was one of constant exertion and industry spent far away in an Irish home among her own kindred and occupations and interests. We may realise what these were when we read that Mr. Edgeworth had no less than four wives, who all left children, and that Maria was the eldest daughter of the whole family. Besides this, we must also remember that the father whom she idolised was himself a man of extraordinary powers, brilliant in conversation (so I have been told), full of animation, of interest, of plans for his country, his family, for education and literature, for mechanics and scientific discoveries; that he was a gentleman widely connected, hospitably inclined, with a large estate and many tenants to overlook, with correspondence and acquaintances all over the world; and, besides all this, with various schemes in his brain, to be eventually realised by others, of which velocipedes, tramways, and telegraphs were but a few of the items.

One could imagine that under these circumstances the hurry and excitement of London life must have sometimes seemed tranquillity itself compared with the many and absorbing interests of such a family. What these interests were may be gathered from the pages of a very interesting memoir from which the writer of this essay has been allowed to quote. It is a book privately printed and written for the use of her children by the widow of Richard Lovell Edgeworth, and is a record, among other things, of a faithful and most touching friendship between Maria and her father's wife—"a friendship lasting for over fifty years, and unbroken by a single cloud of difference or mistrust." Mrs. Edgeworth, who was Miss Beaufort before her marriage, and about the same age as Miss Edgeworth, unconsciously reveals her own most charming and unselfish nature as she tells her stepdaughter's story.

When the writer looks back upon her own childhood, it seems to her that she lived in company with a delightful host of little playmates, bright, busy, clever children, whose cheerful presence remains more vividly in her mind than that of many of the real little boys and girls who used to appear and disappear disconnectedly as children do in childhood, when friendship and companionship depend almost entirely upon the convenience of grown-up people. Now and again came little cousins or friends to share our games, but day by day, constant and unchanging, ever to be relied upon, smiled our most lovable and friendly companions—simple Susan, lame Jervas, Talbot, the dear Little Merchants, Jem the widow's son with his arms round old Lightfoot's neck, the generous Ben, with his whipcord and his useful proverb of "waste not, want not"—all of these were there in the window corner waiting our pleasure. After Parents' Assistant, to which familiar words we attached no meaning whatever, came Popular Tales in big brown volumes off a shelf in the lumber-room of an apartment in an old house in Paris, and as we opened the boards, lo! creation widened to our view. England, Ireland, America, Turkey, the mines of Golconda, the streets of Bagdad, thieves, travellers, governesses, natural philosophy, and fashionable life, were all laid under contribution, and brought interest and adventure to our humdrum nursery corner. All Mr. Edgeworth's varied teaching and experience, all his daughter's genius of observation, came to interest and delight our play-time, and that of a thousand other little children in different parts of the world. People justly praise Miss Edgeworth's admirable stories and novels, but from prejudice and early association these beloved childish histories seem unequalled still, and it is chiefly as a writer for children that we venture to consider her here. Some of the stories are indeed little idylls in their way. Walter Scott, who best knew how to write for the young so as to charm grandfathers as well as Hugh Littlejohn, Esq., and all the grandchildren, is said to have wiped his kind eyes as he put down Simple Susan. A child's book, says a reviewer of those days defining in the *Quarterly Review*, should be "not merely less dry, less difficult, than a book for grown-up people; but more rich in

interest, more true to nature, more exquisite in art, more abundant in every quality that replies to childhood's keener and fresher perception." Children like facts, they like short vivid sentences that tell the story : as they listen intently, so they read ; every word has its value for them. It has been a real surprise to the writer to find, on re-reading some of these descriptions of scenery and adventure which she had not looked at since her childhood, that the details which she had imagined spread over much space, are contained in a few sentences at the beginning of a page. These sentences, however, show the true art of the writer.

It would be difficult to imagine anything better suited to the mind of a very young person than these pleasant stories, so complete in themselves, so interesting, so varied. The description of Jervas' escape from the mine where the miners had plotted his destruction, almost rises to poetry in its simple diction. Lame Jervas has warned his master of the miners' plot, and shown him the vein of ore which they have concealed. The miners have sworn vengeance against him, and his life is in danger. His master helps him to get away, and comes into the room before daybreak, bidding him rise and put on the clothes which he has brought. "I followed him out of the house before anybody else was awake, and he took me across the fields towards the high road. At this place we waited till we heard the tinkling of the bells of a team of horses. 'Here comes the waggon,' said he, 'in which we are to go. So fare you well, Jervas. I shall hear how you go on ; and I only hope you will serve your next master, whoever he may be, as faithfully as you have served me.' 'I shall never find so good a master,' was all I could say for the soul of me ; I was quite overcome by his goodness and sorrow at parting with him, as I then thought, for ever." The description of the journey is very pretty. "The morning clouds began to clear away ; I could see my master at some distance, and I kept looking after him as the waggon went on slowly, and he walked fast away over the fields." Then the sun begins to rise. The waggoner goes on whistling, but lame Jervas, to whom the rising sun was a spectacle wholly surprising, starts up, exclaiming in wonder and admiration. The waggoner bursts into a loud laugh. "Lud a marcy," says he, "to hear un' and look at un' a body would think the oaf had never seen the sun rise afore ;" upon which Jervas remembers that he is still in Cornwall, and must not betray himself, and prudently hides behind some parcels, only just in time, for they meet a party of miners, and he hears his enemies' voice hailing the waggoner. All the rest of the day he sits within, and amuses himself by listening to the bells of the team, which jingle continually. "On our second day's journey, however, I ventured out of my hiding-place. I walked with the waggoner up and down the hills, enjoying the fresh air, the singing of the birds, and the delightful smell of the honeysuckles and the dog-roses in the hedges. All the wild flowers and even the weeds on the banks by the wayside were to me matters of wonder and admiration. At almost every step I paused to observe something that was new

to me, and I could not help feeling surprised at the insensibility of my fellow-traveller, who plodded along, and seldom interrupted his whistling except to cry "Gee, Blackbird, aw woa," or "How now, Smiler." Then Jervas is lost in admiration before a plant "whose stem was about two feet high, and which had a round shining purple beautiful flower," and the waggoner with a look of scorn exclaims, "Help thee, lad, dost not thou know 'tis a common thistle?" After this he looks upon Jervas as very nearly an idiot. "In truth I believe I was a droll figure, for my hat was stuck full of weeds and of all sorts of wild flowers, and both my coat and waistcoat pockets were stuffed out with pebbles and funguses." Then comes Plymouth Harbour: Jervas ventures to ask some questions about the vessels, to which the waggoner answers "They be nothing in life but the boats and ships, man;" so he turned away and went on chewing a straw, and seemed not a whit more moved to admiration than he had been at the sight of the thistle. "I conceived a high admiration of a man who had seen so much that he could admire nothing," says Jervas, with a touch of real humour.

Another most charming little idyll is that of Simple Susan, who was a real maiden living in the neighbourhood of Edgeworthstown. The story seems to have been mislaid for a time in the stirring events of the first Irish rebellion, and overlooked, like some little daisy by a battlefield. Few among us will not have shared Mr. Edgeworth's partiality for the charming little tale. The children fling their garlands and gather their scented violets. Susan bakes her cottage loaves and gathers marigolds for broth, and tends her mother to the distant tune of Philip's pipe coming across the fields. As we read the story again it seems as if we could almost hear the music sounding above the children's voices, and the bleating of the lamb, and scent the fragrance of the primroses and the double violets, so simply and delightfully is the whole story constructed. Among all Miss Edgeworth's characters few are more familiar to the world than that of Susan's pretty pet lamb.

II.

No sketch of Maria Edgeworth's life, however slight, would be complete without a few words about certain persons coming a generation before her (and belonging still to the age of periwigs), who were her father's associates and her own earliest friends. Notwithstanding all that has been said of Mr. Edgeworth's bewildering versatility of nature, he seems to have been singularly faithful in his friendships. He might take up new ties, but he clung pertinaciously to those which had once existed. His daughter inherited that same steadiness of affection. The wisest man of our own day writing of these very people has said, "There is, perhaps, no safer test of a man's real character than that of his long-continued friendship with good and able men. Now Mr. Edgeworth, the father of Maria Edgeworth the authoress, asserts, after mentioning

the names of Keir, Day, Small, Boulton, Watt, Wedgwood, and Darwin, that their mutual intimacy has never been broken except by death. To these names those of Edgeworth himself and of the Galtons may be added. The correspondence in my possession shows the truth of the above assertion."

Mr. Edgeworth first came to Lichfield to make Dr. Darwin's acquaintance. His second visit was to his friend Mr. Day, the author of *Sandford and Merton*, who had taken a house in the valley of Stow, and who invited him one Christmas on a visit. "About the year 1765," says Miss Seward, "came to Lichfield, from the neighbourhood of Reading, the young and gay philosopher, Mr. Edgeworth; a man of fortune, and recently married to a Miss Elers, of Oxfordshire. The fame of Dr. Darwin's various talents allured Mr. E. to the city they graced." And the lady goes on to describe Mr. Edgeworth himself:—"Scarcely two-and-twenty, with an exterior yet more juvenile, having mathematic science, mechanic ingenuity, and a competent portion of classical learning, with the possession of the modern languages. . . . He danced, he fenced, he winged his arrows with more than philosophic skill," continues the lady, herself a person of no little celebrity in her time and place. Mr. Edgeworth, in his memoirs, pays a respectful tribute to Miss Seward's charms, to her agreeable conversation, her beauty, her thick tresses, her sprightliness and address. Such moderate expressions fail, however, to do justice to this lady's powers, to her enthusiasm, her poetry, her partisanship. The portrait prefixed to her letters is that of a dignified person with an oval face and dark eyes, the thick brown tresses are twined with pearls, her graceful figure is robed in the softest furs and draperies of the period. In her very first letter she thus poetically describes her surroundings: "The autumnal glory of this day puts to shame the summer's sullenness. I sit writing upon this dear green terrace, feeding at intervals my little golden-breasted songsters. The embosomed vale of Stow glows sunny through the Claude-Lorraine tint which is spread over the scene like the blue mist over a plum."

In this Claude-Lorraine-plum-tinted valley stood the house which Mr. Day had taken, and where Mr. Edgeworth had come on an eventful visit. Miss Seward herself lived with her parents in the Bishop's palace at Lichfield. There was also a younger sister, "Miss Sally," who died as a girl, and another very beautiful young lady their friend, by name Honora Sneyd, placed under Mrs. Seward's care. She was the heroine of Major André's unhappy romance. He too lived at Lichfield with his mother, and his hopeless love gives a tragic reality to this by-gone holiday of youth and merry-making. As one reads the old letters and memoirs the echoes of its laughter reach us. One can almost see the young folks all coming together out of the Cathedral Close, where so much of it was passed; the beautiful Honora, surrounded by friends and adorers, chaperoned by the graceful muse her senior, also much admired, and much made of. Thomas Day is striding after them in

silence with keen critical glances ; his long black locks flow unpowdered down his back. In contrast to him comes his brilliant and dressy companion, Mr. Edgeworth, who talks so agreeably. I can imagine little Sabrina, the adopted foundling, of whom so many stories have been told, following shyly at her guardian's side in her simple dress and childish beauty, and André's young handsome face turned towards Miss Sneyd. So they pass on happy and contented in each other's company, Honora in the midst, beautiful, stately, reserved : she too was not destined to be old.

Miss Seward seems to have loved this friend with a very sincere and admiring affection, and to have bitterly mourned her early death. Her letters abound in apostrophes to the lost Honora. But perhaps the poor muse expected too much from friendship, too much from life. She expected, as we all do at times, that her friends should be not themselves but her, that they should lead not their lives but her own. So much at least one may gather from the various phases of her style and correspondence, and her complaints of Honora's estrangement and subsequent coldness. Perhaps, also, Miss Seward's many vagaries and sentiments may have frozen Honora's sympathies. Miss Seward was all asterisks and notes of exclamation. Honora seems to have forced feeling down to its most scrupulous expression. She never lived to be softened by experience : with great love she also inspired awe and a sort of surprise. One can imagine her pointing the moral of the purple jar, as it was told long afterwards by her stepdaughter, then a little girl playing at her own mother's knee in her nursery by the river.

People in the days of shilling postage were better correspondents than they are now when we have to be content with pennyworths. Their descriptions and many details bring all the chief characters vividly before us, and carry us into the hearts and pocketbooks of the little society at Lichfield as it then was. The town must have been an agreeable sojourn in those days for people of some pretension and small performance ;—a pleasant lively company living round about the old cathedral towers, meeting in the Close or the adjacent gardens or the hospitable palace itself. Here the company would sip tea, talk mild literature, quoting Dr. Johnson to one another with the familiarity of townfolk. From Erasmus Darwin, too, they must have gained something of vigour and originality. The inhabitants of Lichfield seem actually to have read each other's verses, and having done so to have taken the trouble to sit down and write out their raptures.

With all her absurdities Miss Seward had some real critical power and appreciation ; and some of her lines are very pretty.* An "Ode to

* In a notice of Miss Seward in the *Annual Register*, just after her death in 1809, the writer, who seems to have known her, says, "Conscious of ability, she freely displayed herself in a manner equally remote from annoyance and affectation. . . . Her errors arose from a glowing imagination joined to an excessive sen-

the Sun" is only what might have been expected from this Lichfield Corinne. Her best known productions are an "Elegy on Captain Cook," a "Monody on Major André," whom she had known from her early youth; and there is a poem "Louisa," of which she herself speaks very highly. But even more than her poetry did she pique herself upon her epistolary correspondence. It must have been well worth while writing letters when they were not only prized by the writer and the recipients, but commented on by their friends in after years. "Court Dewes, Esq.," writes, after five years, for copies of Miss Seward's epistles to Miss Rogers and Miss Weston, of which the latter begins:—"Soothing and welcome to me, dear Sophia, is the regret you express for our separation! Pleasant were the weeks we have recently passed together in this ancient and embowered mansion! I had strongly felt the silence and vacancy of the depriving day on which you vanished. How prone are our hearts perversely to quarrel with the friendly coercion of employment at the very instant in which it is clearing the torpid and injurious mists of unavailing melancholy." Then follows a sprightly attack before which Johnson may have quailed indeed. "Is the Fe-fa-fum of literature that snuffs afar the fame of his brother authors, and thirsts for its destruction, to be allowed to gallop unmolested over the fields of criticism? A few pebbles from the well-springs of truth and eloquence are all that is wanted to bring the might of his envy low." This celebrated letter, which may stand as a specimen of the whole six volumes, concludes with the following apostrophe—"Virtuous friendship, how pure, how sacred are thy delights! Sophia, thy mind is capable of tasting them in all their poignance: against how many of life's incidents may that capacity be considered as a counterpoise!"

There were constant rubs, which are not to be wondered at, between Miss Seward and Dr. Darwin, who though a poet was also a singularly witty, downright man, outspoken and humorous. The lady admires his genius, bitterly resents his sarcasms; of his celebrated work, *The Botanic Garden*, she says, "It is a string of poetic brilliants, and they are of the first water, but the eye will be apt to want the interstitial black velvet to give effect to their lustre." In later days, notwithstanding her "elegant language," as Mr. Charles Darwin calls it, she said several spiteful things of her old friend, but they seem more prompted by private pique than malice.

If Miss Seward was the Minerva and Dr. Darwin the Jupiter of the Lichfield society, its philosopher was Thomas Day, of whom Miss Seward's description is so good that I cannot help one more quotation:—

"Powder and fine clothes were at that time the appendages of gentlemen; Mr. Day wore not either. He was tall and stooped in the shoulders, full made but not corpulent, and in his meditative and melan-

sibility, cherished instead of repressed by early habits. It is understood that she has left the whole of her works to Mr. Scott, the northern poet, with a view to their publication with her life and posthumous pieces."

choly air a degree of awkwardness and dignity were blended." She then compares him with his guest, Mr. Edgeworth. "Less graceful, less amusing, less brilliant than Mr. E., but more highly imaginative, more classical, and a deeper reasoner; strict integrity, energetic friendship, open-handed generosity, and diffusive charity, greatly overbalanced on the side of virtue, the tincture of misanthropic gloom and proud contempt of common life society." Wright, of Derby, painted a full-length picture of Mr. Day in 1770. "Mr. Day looks upward enthusiastically, meditating on the contents of a book held in his dropped right hand . . . a flash of lightning plays in his hair and illuminates the contents of the volume." "Dr. Darwin," adds Miss Seward, "sat to Mr. Wright about the same period—that was a simply contemplative portrait of the most perfect resemblance."

III.

Maria must have been three years old this eventful Christmas time when her father, leaving his wife in Berkshire, came to stay with Mr. Day at Lichfield, and first made the acquaintance of Miss Seward and her poetic circle. Mr. Day, who had once already been disappointed in love, and whose romantic scheme of adopting his foundlings, and of educating one of them to be his wife, has often been described, had brought one of the maidens to the house he had taken at Lichfield. This was Sabrina, as he had called her. Lucretia, having been found troublesome, had been sent off with a dowry to be apprenticed to a milliner. Sabrina was a charming little girl of thirteen; everybody liked her, especially the friendly ladies at the Palace, who received her with constant kindness, as they did Mr. Day himself and his visitor. What Miss Seward thought of Sabrina's education I do not know. The poor child was to be taught to despise luxury, to ignore fear, to be superior to pain. She appears, however, to have been very fond of her benefactor, but to have constantly provoked him by starting and screaming whenever he fired uncharged pistols at her skirts, or dropped hot melted sealing-wax on her bare arms. She is described as lovely and artless, not fond of books, incapable of understanding scientific problems, or of keeping the imaginary and terrible secrets with which her guardian used to try her nerves. I do not know if it had yet occurred to him that Honora Sneyd was all that his dreams could have imagined. One day he left Sabrina under many restrictions, and returning unexpectedly found her wearing some garment or handkerchief of which he did not approve. Poor Sabrina was evidently not meant to mate and soar with philosophical eagles; and, after this episode, she too was despatched, to board with an old lady, in peace for a time, let us hope, and in tranquil mediocrity.

Mr. Edgeworth approved of this arrangement; he did not consider that Sabrina was suited to his friend. But being taken in due time to call at the Palace, he was charmed with Miss Seward, and still more

by all he saw of Honora; comparing her, alas! in his mind "with all other women, and secretly acknowledging her superiority." At first, he says, Miss Seward's brilliance overshadowed Honora, but very soon her merits grew upon the bystanders.

Mr. Edgeworth carefully concealed his feelings except from his host, who was beginning himself to contemplate a marriage with Miss Sneyd. Mr. Day presently proposed formally in writing for the hand of the lovely Honora, and Mr. Edgeworth was to take the packet and to bring back the answer; and being married himself, and out of the running, he appears to have been unselfishly anxious for his friend's success. In the packet Mr. Day had written down the conditions to which he should expect his wife to subscribe. She would have to give up all luxuries, amenities, and intercourse with the world, and promise to seclude herself in his company. Miss Sneyd seems to have kept Mr. Edgeworth waiting while she wrote back at once and decidedly saying that she could not admit the unqualified control of a husband over all her actions, nor the necessity for "seclusion from society to preserve female virtue." Finding that Honora absolutely refused to change her way of life, Mr. Day went into a fever, for which Dr. Darwin bled him. Nor did he recover until another Miss Sneyd, Elizabeth by name, made her appearance in the Close.

Mr. Edgeworth, who was of a lively and active disposition, had introduced archery among the gentlemen of the neighbourhood, and he describes a fine summer evening's entertainment, passed in agreeable sports, followed by dancing and music, in the course of which Honora's sister, Miss Elizabeth, appeared for the first time on the Lichfield scene, and immediately joined in the country dance. There is a vivid description of the two sisters in Mr. Edgeworth's memoirs, of the beautiful and distinguished Honora, loving science, serious, eager, reserved; of the more lovely but less graceful Elizabeth, with less of energy, more of humour and of social gifts than her sister. Elizabeth Sneyd was, says Edgeworth, struck by Day's eloquence, by his unbounded generosity, by his scorn of wealth. His educating a young girl for his wife seemed to her romantic and extraordinary; and she seems to have thought it possible to yield to the evident admiration she had aroused in him. But, whether in fun or in seriousness, she represented to him that he could not with justice decry accomplishments and graces that he had not acquired. She wished him to go abroad for a time to study to perfect himself in all that was wanting; on her own part she promised not to go to Bath, London, or any public place of amusement until his return, and to read certain books which he recommended.

Meanwhile Mr. Edgeworth had made no secret of his own feeling for Honora to Mr. Day, "who with all the eloquence of virtue and of friendship" had urged him to fly, to accompany him abroad, and to shun dangers he could not hope to overcome. Edgeworth consented to this proposal, and the two friends started for Paris, visiting Rousseau on their way.

They spent the winter at Lyons, as it was a place where excellent masters of all sorts were to be found; and here Mr. Day, with excess of zeal—

put himself (says his friend) to every species of torture, ordinary and extraordinary, to compel his Antigallican limbs, in spite of their natural rigidity, to dance and fence, and manage the *great horse*. To perform his promise to Miss E. Sneyd honourably, he gave up seven or eight hours of the day to these exercises, for which he had not the slightest taste, and for which, except horsemanship, he manifested the most sovereign contempt. It was astonishing to behold the energy with which he persevered in these pursuits. I have seen him stand between two boards which reached from the ground higher than his knees: these boards were adjusted with screws so as barely to permit him to bend his knees, and to rise up and sink down. By these means Mr. Huise proposed to force Mr. Day's knees outwards; but screwing was in vain. He succeeded in torturing his patient; but original formation and inveterate habit resisted all his endeavours at personal improvement. I could not help pitying my philosophic friend, pent up in duress vile for hours together, with his feet in the stocks, a book in his hand, and contempt in his heart.

Mr. Edgeworth meanwhile lodged himself "in excellent and agreeable apartments," and occupied himself with engineering. He is certainly curiously outspoken in his memoirs; and explains that the first Mrs. Edgeworth, Maria's mother, with many merits was of a complaining disposition, and did not make him so happy at home as a woman of a more lively temper might have succeeded in doing. He was tempted, he said, to look for happiness elsewhere than in his home. Perhaps domestic affairs may have been complicated by a warm-hearted but troublesome little son, who at Day's suggestion had been brought up upon the Rousseau system, and was in consequence quite unmanageable, and a trouble to everybody. Poor Mrs. Edgeworth's complainings were not to last very long. She joined her husband at Lyons, and after a time, having a dread of lying-in abroad, returned home to die in her confinement, leaving four little children. Maria could remember being taken into her mother's room to see her for the last time.

Mr. Edgeworth hurried back to England, and was met by his friend Thomas Day, who had preceded him, and whose own suit does not seem to have prospered meanwhile. His first words were to tell his friend that Honora was still free, more beautiful than ever; while virtue and honour commanded it, he had done all he could to divide them, now he wished to be the first to promote their meeting. The meeting resulted in an engagement, and Mr. Edgeworth and Miss Sneyd were married within four months by the benevolent old canon in the Lady Chapel of Lichfield Cathedral.

Mrs. Seward wept; Miss Seward, "notwithstanding some imaginary dissatisfaction about a bridesmaid," was really glad of the marriage, we are told; and the young couple immediately went over to Ireland.

IV.

Though her life was so short, Honora Edgeworth seems to have made the deepest impression on all those she came across. Over little

Maria she had the greatest influence. There is a pretty description of the child standing lost in wondering admiration of her stepmother's beauty, as she watched her soon after her marriage dressing at her toilet-table. Little Maria's feeling for her stepmother was very deep and real, and the influence of those few years lasted for a lifetime. Her own exquisite carefulness she always ascribed to it, and to this example may also be attributed her habits of order and self-government, her life of reason and deliberate judgment.

The seven years of Honora's married life seem to have been very peaceful and happy. She shared her husband's pursuits, and wished for nothing outside her own home. She began with him to write those little books which were afterwards published. It is just a century ago since she and Mr. Edgeworth planned the early histories of Harry and Lucy and Frank; while Mr. Day began his *Sandford and Merton*, which at first was intended to appear at the same time, though eventually the third part was not published till 1789.

As a girl of seventeen Honora Sneyd had once been threatened with consumption. After seven years of married life the cruel malady again declared itself; and though Dr. Darwin did all that human resource could do, and though every tender care was lavished, the poor young lady rapidly sank. There is a sad, prim, most affecting little letter, addressed to little Maria by the dying woman shortly before the end; and then comes that one written by the father, which is to tell her that all is over.

If Mr. Edgeworth was certainly unfortunate in losing again and again the happiness of his home, he was more fortunate than most people in being able to rally from his grief. He does not appear to have been unfaithful in feeling. Years after, Edgeworth, writing to console Mrs. Day upon her husband's death, speaks in the most touching way of all he had suffered when Honora died, and of the struggle he had made to regain his hold of life. This letter is in curious contrast to that one written at the time, as he sits by poor Honora's deathbed, which reads strangely cold and irrelevant in these days when people are not ashamed of feeling or of describing what they feel. "Continue, my dear daughter"—he writes to Maria, who was then thirteen years old—"the desire which you feel of becoming amiable, prudent and of use. The ornamental parts of a character, with such an understanding as yours, necessarily ensue; but true judgment and sagacity in the choice of friends, and the regulation of your behaviour, can be only had from reflection, and from being thoroughly convinced of what experience in general teaches too late, that to be happy we must be good."

"Such a letter, written at such a time," says the kind biographer, "made the impression it was intended to convey; and the wish to act up to the high opinion her father had formed of her character became an exciting and controlling power over the whole of Maria's future life." On her deathbed, Honora urged her husband to marry again, and assured him that the woman to suit him was her sister Elizabeth. Her influence

was so great upon them both that, although Elizabeth was attached to some one else, and Mr. Edgeworth believed she was little suited to himself, they were presently engaged and married, not without many difficulties. The result proved how rightly Honora had judged.

It was to her father that Maria owed the suggestion of her first start in literature. Immediately after Honora's death he tells her to write a tale about the length of a *Spectator*, on the subject of generosity. "It must be taken from history or romance, must be sent the day se'nnight after you receive this; and I beg you will take some pains about it." A young gentleman from Oxford was also set to work to try his powers on the same subject, and Mr. William Sneyd, at Lichfield, was to be judge between the two performances. He gave his verdict for Maria: "An excellent story and very well written: but where's the generosity?" This, we are told, became a sort of proverb in the Edgeworth family.

The little girl meanwhile was sent to school to a certain Mrs. Lafafiere, where she was taught to use her fingers, to write a lovely delicate hand, to work white satin waistcoats for her papa. She was then removed to a fashionable establishment in Upper Wimpole Street, where, says her stepmother, "she underwent all the usual tortures of backboards, iron collars, and dumbbells, with the unusual one of being hung by the neck to draw out the muscles and increase the growth,—a signal failure in her case." (Miss Edgeworth was always a very tiny person.) There is a description of the little maiden absorbed in her book with all the other children at play, while she sits in her favourite place in front of a carved oak cabinet, quite unconscious of the presence of the romping girls all about her.

Hers was a very interesting character as it appears in the Memoirs—sincere, intelligent, self-contained, and yet dependent; methodical, observant. Sometimes as one reads of her in early life one is reminded of some of the personal characteristics of the writer who perhaps of all writers least resembles Miss Edgeworth in her art—of Charlotte Brontë, whose books are essentially of the modern and passionate school, but whose strangely mixed character seemed rather to belong to the orderly and neatly ruled existence of Queen Charlotte's reign. People's lives as they really are don't perhaps vary very much, but people's lives as they seem to be assuredly change with the fashions. Miss Edgeworth and Miss Brontë were both Irishwomen, who have often, with all their outcome, the timidity which comes of quick and sensitive feeling. But the likeness does not go very deep. Maria, whose diffidence and timidity were personal, but who had a firm and unalterable belief in family traditions, may have been saved from some danger of prejudice and limitation by a most fortunate though trying illness which affected her eyesight, and which caused her to be removed from her school with its monstrous elegancies to the care of Mr. Day, that kindest and sternest of friends.

This philosopher in love had been bitterly mortified when the lively Elizabeth Sneyd, instead of welcoming his return, could not conceal her

laughter at his uncouth elegancies, and confessed that, on the whole, she had liked him better as he was before. He forswore Lichfield and marriage, and went abroad to forget. He turned his thoughts to politics; he wrote pamphlets on public subjects and letters upon slavery. His poem of the "Dying Negro" had been very much admired. Miss Hannah More speaks of it in her Memoirs. The subject of slavery was much before people's minds, and Day's influence had not a little to do with the rising indignation.

Among Day's readers and admirers was one person who was destined to have a most important influence upon his life. By a strange chance his extraordinary ideal was destined to be realised; and a young lady, good, accomplished, rich, devoted, who had read his books, and sympathised with his generous dreams, was ready not only to consent to his strange conditions, but to give him her kind heart and find her best happiness in his society and in carrying out his experiments and fancies. She was Miss Esther Milnes, of Yorkshire, an heiress; and though at first Day hesitated and could not believe in the reality of her feeling, her constancy and singleness of mind were not to be resisted, and they were married at Bath in 1778. We hear of Mr. and Mrs. Day spending the first winter of their married life at Hampstead, and of Mrs. Day, thickly shodden, walking with him in a snowstorm on the common, and ascribing her renewed vigour to her husband's wise advice.

Day and his wife eventually established themselves at Anningsley, near Chobham. He had insisted upon settling her fortune upon herself, but Mrs. Day assisted him in every way, and sympathised in his many schemes and benevolent ventures. When he neglected to make a window to the dressing-room he built for her, we hear of her uncomplainingly lighting her candles; to please him she worked as a servant in the house, and all their large means were bestowed in philanthropic and charitable schemes. Mr. Edgeworth quotes his friend's reproof to Mrs. Day, who was fond of music: "Shall we beguile the time with the strains of a lute while our fellow-creatures are starving?" "I am out of pocket every year about 300*l.* by the farm I keep," Day writes to his friend Edgeworth. "The soil I have taken in hand, I am convinced, is one of the most completely barren in England." He then goes on to explain his reasons for what he is about. "It enables me to employ the poor, and the result of all my speculations about humanity is that the only way of benefiting mankind is to give them employment and make them earn their money." There is a pretty description of the worthy couple in their home dispensing help and benefits all round about, draining, planting, teaching, doctoring—nothing came amiss to them. Their chief friend and neighbour was Samuel Cobbett, who understood their plans, and sympathised in their efforts, which, naturally enough, were viewed with doubt and mistrust by most of the people round about. It was here that Mr. Day finished *Sandford and Merton*, begun many years before. His death was very sudden, and was brought about by one of

his own benevolent theories. He used to maintain that kindness alone could tame animals; and he was killed by a fall from a favourite colt which he was breaking in. Mrs. Day never recovered the shock. She lived two years hidden in her home, absolutely inconsolable, and then died and was laid by her husband's side in the churchyard at Wargrave by the river.

It was to the care of these worthy people that little Maria was sent when she was ill, and she was doctored by them both physically and morally. "Bishop Berkeley's tar-water was still considered a specific for all complaints," says Mrs. Edgeworth. "Mr. Day thought it would be of use to Maria's inflamed eyes, and he used to bring a large tumbler full of it to her every morning. She dreaded his 'Now, Miss Maria, drink this.' But there was, in spite of his stern voice, something of pity and sympathy in his countenance. His excellent library was open to her, and he directed her studies. His severe reasoning and uncompromising truth of mind awakened all her powers, and the questions he put to her and the working out of the answers, the necessity of perfect accuracy in all her words, suited the natural truth of her mind; and though such strictness was not agreeable, she even then perceived its advantage, and in after life was grateful for it."

V.

We have seen how Miss Elizabeth Sneyd, who could not make up her mind to marry Mr. Day, notwithstanding all he had gone through for her sake, had eventually consented to become Mr. Edgeworth's third wife. With this stepmother for many years to come Maria lived in an affectionate intimacy, only to be exceeded by that most faithful companionship which existed for fifty years between her and the lady from whose memoirs I quote.

It was about 1782 that Maria went home to live at Edgeworthstown with her father and his wife, with the many young brothers and sisters. The family was a large one, and already consisted of her own sisters, of Honora the daughter of Mrs. Honora, and Lovell her son. To these succeeded many others of the third generation; and two sisters of Mrs. Edgeworth's, who also made their home at Edgeworthstown.

Maria had once before been there, very young, but she was now old enough to be struck with the difference then so striking between Ireland and England. The tones and looks, the melancholy and the gaiety of the people, were so new and extraordinary to her that the delineations she long afterwards made of Irish character probably owe their life and truth to the impression made on her mind at this time as a stranger. Though it was June when they landed, there was snow on the roses she ran out to gather, and she felt altogether in a new and unfamiliar country.

She herself describes the feelings of the master of a family returning to an Irish home:—

Wherever he turned his eyes, in or out of his home, damp dilapidation, waste appeared. Painting, glazing, roofing, fencing, finishing—all were wanting. The backyard and even the front lawn round the windows of the house were filled with

loungers, followers, and petitioners; tenants, undertenants, drivers, sub-agent and agent were to have audience; and they all had grievances and secret informations, accusations, reciprocations, and quarrels each under each interminable.

Her account of her father's dealings with them is admirable:—

I was with him constantly, and I was amused and interested in seeing how he made his way through their complaints, petitions, and grievances with decision and despatch, he all the time in good humour with the people and they delighted with him, though he often rated them roundly when they stood before him perverse in litigation, helpless in procrastination, detected in cunning or convicted of falsehood. They saw into his character almost as soon as he understood theirs.

Mr. Edgeworth had in a very remarkable degree that power of ruling and administering which is one of the rarest of gifts. He seems to have shown great firmness and good sense in his conduct in the troubled times in which he lived. He saw to his own affairs, administered justice, put down middlemen as far as possible, reorganised the letting out of the estate. Unlike many of his neighbours, he was careful not to sacrifice the future to present ease of mind and of pocket. He put down rack-rents and bribes of every sort, and did his best to establish things upon a firm and lasting basis.

But if it was not possible even for Mr. Edgeworth to make things all they should have been outside the house, inside the sketch given of the family life is very pleasant. The father lives in perfect confidence with his children, admitting them to his confidence, interesting them in his experiments, spending his days with them, consulting them. There are no reservations; he does his business in the great family sitting-room, surrounded by his family. I have heard it described as a large ground-floor room, with two columns supporting the farther end, by one of which Maria's writing-desk used to be placed—a desk which her father had devised for her, which used to be drawn out to the fireside when she worked. Does not Mr. Edgeworth also mention in one of his letters a picture of Thomas Day hanging over a sofa against a wall? Books in plenty there were, we may be sure, and perhaps models of ingenious machines and different appliances for scientific work. Sir Henry Holland and Mr. Ticknor give a curious description of Mr. Edgeworth's many ingenious inventions. There were strange locks to the rooms and telegraphic despatches to the kitchen; clocks at the other end of the house were wound up by simply opening certain doors. It has been remarked that all Miss Edgeworth's heroes had a smattering of science. Several of her brothers inherited her father's turn for it. We hear of them raising steeples and establishing telegraphs in partnership with him. Maria used to help her father in the business connected with the estate, to assist him, also, to keep the accounts. She had a special turn for accounts, and she was pleased with her exquisite neat columns and by the accuracy with which her figures fell into their proper places. Long after her father's death this knowledge and experience enabled her to manage the estate for her eldest stepbrother, Mr. Lovell Edgeworth.

She was able, at a time of great national difficulty and anxious crisis, to meet a storm in which many a larger fortune was wrecked.

But in 1782 she was a young girl only beginning life. Storms were not yet, and she was putting out her wings in the sunshine. Her father set her to translate *Adèle et Théodore*, by Madame de Genlis (she had a great facility for languages, and her French was really remarkable). Holcroft's version of the book, however, appeared, and the Edgeworth translation was never completed. Mr. Day wrote a letter to congratulate Mr. Edgeworth on the occasion. It seemed horrible to Mr. Day that a woman should appear in print.

It is possible that the Edgeworth family was no exception to the rule by which large and clever and animated families are apt to live in a certain atmosphere of their own. But, notwithstanding her strong family bias, few people can have seen more of the world, felt its temper more justly, or appreciated more fully the interesting people walking about in it than Maria Edgeworth. Within easy reach of Edgeworthtown were different agreeable and cultivated houses. There was Pakenham Hall with Lord Longford for its master; one of its daughters was the future Duchess of Wellington, "who was always Kitty Pakenham for her old friends." There at Castle Forbes also lived, I take it, more than one of the well-bred and delightful people, out of Patronage, and the "Absentee," who may, in real life, have borne the names of Lady Moira and Lady Granard. Besides, there were cousins and relations without number—Foxes, Ruxtons, marriages and intermarriages; and when the time came for occasional absences and expeditions from home, the circles seem to have spread incalculably in every direction. The Edgeworths appear to have been genuinely sociable people, interested in others and certainly interesting to them.

VI.

The first letter given in the Memoirs from Maria to her favourite aunt Ruxton is a very sad one, which tells of the early death of her sister Honora, a beautiful girl of fifteen, the only daughter of Mrs. Honora Edgeworth, who also died of consumption. This letter, written in the dry phraseology of the time, is nevertheless full of feeling, above all for the father who, as Maria says elsewhere, ever since she could think or feel, was the first object and motive of her mind.

Mrs. Edgeworth describes her sister-in-law as follows:—

Mrs. Ruxton resembled her brother in the wit and vivacity of her mind and strong affections; her grace and charm of manner were such that a gentleman once said of her: "If I were to see Mrs. Ruxton in rags as a beggar woman sitting on the doorstep, I should say 'Madam' to her." "To write to her Aunt Ruxton was, as long as she lived, Maria's greatest pleasure while away from her," writes Mrs. Edgeworth, "and to be with her was a happiness she enjoyed with never flagging and supreme delight. Blackcastle was within a few hours' drive of Edgeworthtown, and to go to Blackcastle was the holiday of her life."

Mrs. Edgeworth tells a story of Maria once staying at Blackcastle

and tearing out the title-page of *Belinda*, so that her aunt, Mrs. Ruxton, read the book without any suspicion of the author. She was so delighted with it that she insisted on Maria listening to page after page, exclaiming "Is not that admirably written?" "Admirably read, I think," said Maria, until her aunt, quite provoked by her faint acquiescence, says, "I am sorry to see my little Maria unable to bear the praises of a rival author;" at which poor Maria burst into tears, and Mrs. Ruxton could never bear the book mentioned afterwards.

It was with Mrs. Ruxton that a little boy, born just after the death of the author of *Sandford and Merton*, was left on the occasion of the departure of the Edgeworth family for Clifton, in 1792, where Mr. Edgeworth spent a couple of years for the health of one of his sons. During their stay at Clifton Richard Edgeworth, the eldest son, who had been brought up upon Rousseau's system, and who seems to have found the Old World too restricted a sphere for his energies, and who had gone to sea and disappeared suddenly, paid them a visit from South Carolina, where he had settled and married. The young man was welcomed by them all. He had been long separated from home, and he died very young in America; but his sister always clung to him with fond affection. In July the poor little brother dies in Ireland. "There does not, now that little Thomas is gone, exist even a person of the same name as Mr. Day," says Mr. Edgeworth, who concludes his letter philosophically, as the father of twenty children may be allowed to do, by expressing a hope that to his nurses, Mrs. Ruxton and her daughter, "the remembrance of their own goodness will soon obliterate the painful impression of his miserable end."

Miss Edgeworth seems to have felt the departure of her brother Richard very much. "Last Saturday my poor brother Richard took leave of us to return to America. He has gone up to London with my father and mother, and is to sail from thence. We could not part from him without great pain and regret, for he made us all extremely fond of him."

Notwithstanding these melancholy events, Maria Edgeworth seems to have led a happy busy life at this time among her friends, her relations, her many interests, her many fancies and facts, making much of the children, of whom she writes pleasant descriptions to her aunt. "Charlotte is very engaging and promises to be handsome. Sneyd is, and promises everything. Henry will, I think, through life always do more than he promises. Little Honora is a sprightly blue-eyed child at nurse with a woman who is the picture of health and simplicity. Lovell is perfectly well. Doctor Darwin has paid him very handsome compliments on his lines on the Barbarini Vase in the first part of the Botanic Garden."

Mr. Edgeworth found the time long at Clifton, though, as usual, he at once improved his opportunities, paid visits to his friends in London and elsewhere, and renewed many former intimacies and correspondences.

Maria also paid a visit to London, but the time had not come for her

to enjoy society, and the extreme shyness of which Mrs. Edgeworth speaks made it pain to her to be in society in those early days. "Since I have been away from home," she writes, "I have missed the society of my father, mother, and sisters more than I can express, and more than beforehand I could have thought possible. I long to see them all again. Even when I am most amused I feel a void, and now I understand what an aching void is perfectly." Very soon we hear of her at home again, "scratching away at the Freeman family." Mr. Edgeworth is reading aloud Gay's *Trivia* among other things, which she recommends to her aunt. "I had much rather make a bargain with any one I loved to read the same books with them at the same hour than to look at the moon like Rousseau's famous lovers." There is another book, a new book for the children, mentioned about this time, *Evenings at Home*, which they all admire immensely.

Miss Edgeworth was now about 26, at an age when a woman's powers have fully ripened; a change comes over her style; there is a fulness of description in her letters and a security of expression which show maturity. Her habit of writing was now established, and she describes the constant interest her father took and his share in all she did. Some of the slighter stories she first wrote upon a slate and read out to her brothers and sisters; others she sketched for her father's approval, and arranged and altered as he suggested. The letters for literary ladies were with the publishers by this time, and these were followed by various stories and early lessons, portions of *Parents' Assistant*, and of popular tales, all of which were sent out in packets and lent from one member of the family to another before finally reaching Mr. Johnson, the publisher's, hands. Maria Edgeworth in some of her letters from Clifton alludes with some indignation to the story of Mrs. Hannah More's ungrateful *protégée* Lactilla, the literary milkwoman, whose poems Hannah More was at such pains to bring before the world, and for whom, with her kind preface and warm commendations and subscription list, she was able to obtain the large sum of 500*l*. The ungrateful Lactilla, who had been starving when Mrs. More found her out, seems to have lost her head in this sudden prosperity, and to have accused her benefactress of wishing to steal a portion of the money. Maria Edgeworth must have been also interested in some family marriages which took place about this time. Her sister Anna became engaged to Dr. Beddoes, of Clifton, whose name appears as prescribing for the authors of various memoirs of that day. He is "a man of ability, of a great name in the scientific world," says Mr. Edgeworth, who favoured the Doctor's "declared passion," as a proposal was then called, and the marriage accordingly took place on their return to Ireland. Emmeline, another sister, was soon after married to Mr. King, a surgeon, also living at Bristol, and Maria was now left the only remaining daughter of the first marriage, to be good aunt, sister, friend to all the younger members of the party. She was all this, but she herself expressly states that her father would never allow her

to be turned into a nursery drudge ; her share of the family was limited to one special little boy. Meanwhile her pen-and-ink children are growing up.

"I beg, dear Sophy," she writes to her cousin, "that you will not call my little stories by the sublime name of my works ; I shall else be ashamed when the little mouse comes forth. The stories are printed and bound the same size as *Evenings at Home*, but I am afraid you will dislike the title. My father had sent the *Parents' Friend*, but Mr. Johnson has degraded it into *Parents' Assistant*."

In 1797, says Miss Beaufort, who was to be so soon more intimately connected with the Edgeworth family, Johnson wished to publish more volumes of the *Parents' Assistant* on fine paper, with prints, and Mrs. Ruxton asked me to make some designs for them. These designs seem to have given great satisfaction to the Edgeworth party, and especially to a little boy called William, Mrs. Edgeworth's youngest boy, who grew up to be a fine young man, but who died young of the cruel family complaint. Mrs. Edgeworth's health was also failing all this time—"Though she makes epigrams she is far from well," says Maria ; but they none of them seemed seriously alarmed. Mr. Edgeworth, in the intervals of politics, is absorbed in the telegraph, which, with the help of his sons, he is trying to establish. It is one which acts by night as well as by day.

It was a time of change and stir for Ireland, disaffection growing and put down for a time by the soldiers ; armed bands going about "defending" the country and breaking its windows. In 1794 threats of a French invasion had alarmed everybody, and now again in 1796 came rumours of every description, and Mr. Edgeworth was very much disappointed that his proposal for establishing a telegraph across the water to England was rejected by Government. He also writes to Dr. Darwin that he had offered himself as a candidate for the county, and been obliged to relinquish at the last moment ; but these minor disappointments were lost in the trouble which fell upon the household in the following year—the death of the mother of the family, who sank rapidly and died of consumption in 1797.

VII.

When Mr. Edgeworth himself died, not without many active post-mortem wishes and directions, leaving his entertaining Memoirs half finished, he desired his daughter Maria in the most emphatic way to complete them, and to publish them without changing or altering anything that he had written. People reading them were surprised by the contents ; they blamed Miss Edgeworth for making them public, not knowing how solemn and binding these dying commands had been, says Mrs. Leadbeater, writing at the time to Mrs. Trench. Many severe and wounding reviews appeared, and this may have influenced Miss Edgeworth in her own objection to her Memoirs being published by her family.

Mr. Edgeworth's life was most extraordinary, comprising in fact

three or four lives in the place of that one usually allowed to most people, some of us having to be moderately content with a half or three-quarters of existence. But his versatility of mind was no less remarkable than his tenacity of purpose and strength of affection, though some measure of sentiment must have certainly been wanting. The writer once expressed her surprise at the extraordinary influence that Mr. Edgeworth seems to have had over women and over the many members of his family who continued to reside in his home after the various changes which had taken place there. The lady to whom she spoke was one who has seen more of life than most of us, who has for years past carried help to the far-away and mysterious East, but whose natural place is at home in the more prosperous and unattainable West End. This lady said, "You do not in the least understand what my Uncle Edgeworth was. I never knew anything like him. Brilliant, full of energy and charm, he was something quite extraordinary and irresistible. If you had known him you would not have wondered at anything." This lady had sat upon Maria Edgeworth's knee as a little girl, and remembered her writing in her place by the column in the big sitting room.

"I had in the spring of that year (1797) paid my first visit to Edgeworthstown with my mother and sister," writes Miss Beaufort, afterwards Mrs. Edgeworth, the author of the Memoirs. "My father had long before been there, and had frequently met Mr. Edgeworth at Mrs. Ruxton's. In 1795 my father was presented to the living of Collon, in the county of Louth, where he resided from that time. His vicarage was within five minutes' walk of the residence of Mr. Foster, then Speaker of the Irish House of Commons, the dear friend of Mr. Edgeworth, who came to Collon in the spring of 1798 several times, and at last offered me his hand, which I accepted."

Maria, who was at first very much opposed to the match, would not have been herself the most devoted and faithful of daughters if she had not eventually agreed to her father's wishes, and, as daughters do, come by degrees to feel with him and to see with his eyes. The influence of a father over a daughter where real sympathy exists is one of the very deepest and strongest that can be imagined. Miss Beaufort herself seems also to have had some special attraction for Maria. She was about her own age. She must have been a person of singularly sweet character and gentle liberality of mind. "You will come into a new family, but you will not come as a stranger, dear Miss Beaufort," writes generous Maria. "You will not lead a new life, but only continue to lead the life you have been used to in your own happy cultivated family." And her stepmother in a few feeling words describes all that Maria was to her from the very first when she came as a bride to the home where the children of the lately lost wife and her sisters were all assembled to meet her.

It gives an unpleasant thrill to read of the newly-married lady coming along to her home in a postchaise, and seeing something odd on the side of the road. "Look to the other side; don't look at it," says Mr.

Edgeworth ; and when they had passed he tells his bride that it was the body of a man hung by the rebels between the shafts of a car.

The family at Edgeworthstown consisted of two ladies, sisters of the late Mrs. Edgeworth, who made it their home, and of Maria, the last of the first family. Lovell, now the eldest son, was away ; but there were also four daughters and three sons at home.

All agreed in making me feel at once at home and part of the family ; all received me with the most unaffected cordiality ; but from Maria it was something more. She more than fulfilled the promise of her letter ; she made me at once her most intimate friend, and in every trifle of the day treated me with the most generous confidence.

Those times were even more serious than they are now ; we hear of Mr. Bond, the High Sheriff, paying " a pale visit " to Edgeworthstown. " I am going on in the old way, writing stories," says Maria Edgeworth, writing in 1798. " I cannot be a captain of dragoons, and sitting with my hands before me would not make any one of us one degree safer. . . . Simple Susan went to Foxhall a few days ago for Lady Anne to carry her to England." " My father has made our little rooms so nice for us," she continues ; " they are all fresh painted and papered. Oh ! rebels, oh ! French spare them. We have never injured you, and all we wish is to see everybody as happy as ourselves."

On August 29 we find from Miss Edgeworth's letter to her cousin that the French have got to Castlebar. " The Lord-Lieutenant is now at Athlone, and it is supposed it will be their next object of attack. My father's corps of yeomanry are extremely attached to him and seem fully in earnest ; but, alas ! by some strange negligence, their arms have not yet arrived from Dublin. . . . We, who are so near the scene of action, cannot by any means discover what *number* of the French actually landed, some say 800, some 1,800, some 18,000."

The family had a narrow escape that day, for two officers, who were in charge of some ammunition, offered to take them under their protection as far as Longford. Mr. Edgeworth most fortunately detained them. " Half an hour afterwards, as we were quietly sitting in the portico, we heard, as we thought close to us, the report of a pistol or a clap of thunder which shook the house. The officer soon after returned almost speechless ; he could hardly explain what had happened. The ammunition cart, containing nearly three barrels of gunpowder, took fire, and burnt half way on the road to Longford. The man who drove the cart was blown to atoms. Nothing of him could be found. Two of the horses were killed ; others were blown to pieces, and their limbs scattered to a distance. The head and body of a man were found a hundred and twenty yards from the spot. . . . If we had gone with this ammunition cart, we must have been killed. An hour or two afterwards we were obliged to fly from Edgeworthstown. The pikemen, 300 in number, were within a mile of the town ; my mother and Charlotte and I rode ; passed the trunk of the dead man, bloody limbs of horses,

and two dead horses, by the help of men who pulled on our steeds—all safely lodged now in Mrs. Fallon's Inn." "Before we had reached the place where the cart had been blown up," says Mrs. Edgeworth, "Mr. Edgeworth suddenly recollected that he had left on the table in his study a list of the yeomanry corps which he feared might endanger the poor fellows and their families if it fell into the hands of the rebels. He galloped back for it. It was at the hazard of his life; but the rebels had not yet appeared. He burned the paper, and rejoined us safely." The Memoirs give a most interesting and spirited account of the next few days. The rebels spared Mr. Edgeworth's house, although they broke in. After a time the family were told that all was safe for their return, and the account of their coming home, as it is given in the second volume of Mr. Edgeworth's life by his daughter, is a model of style and admirable description.

In 1799 Mr. Edgeworth came into Parliament for the borough of St. Johnstown. He was a Unionist by conviction, but he did not think the times were yet ripe for the Union, and he therefore voted against it. In some of his letters to Dr. Darwin written at this time, he says that he was offered 3,000 guineas for his seat for the few remaining weeks of the session, which, needless to say, he refused, not thinking it well, as he says, "*to quarrel with myself.*" He also adds that Maria continues writing for children under the persuasion that she cannot be more serviceably employed; and he sends (with his usual perspicuity) affectionate messages to the Doctor's "good amiable lady and *his giant brood.*" But this long friendly correspondence was coming to an end. The Doctor's letters, so quietly humorous and to the point, Mr. Edgeworth's answers with all their characteristic and lively variety, were nearly over.

It was in 1800 that Maria had achieved her great success, and published *Castle Rackrent*, a book—not for children this time—which made everybody talk who read, and those read who had only talked before. This work was published anonymously, and so great was its reputation that some one was at the pains to copy out the whole of the story with erasures and different signs of authenticity, and assume the authorship.

One very distinctive mark of Maria Edgeworth's mind is the honest candour and genuine critical faculty which is hers. Her appreciation of her own work and that of others is unaffected and really discriminating, whether it is *Corinne* or a simple story which she is reading, or Scott's new novel the *Pirate*, or one of her own manuscripts which she estimates justly and reasonably. "I have read *Corinne* with my father, and I like it better than he does. In one word, I am dazzled by the genius, provoked by the absurdities, and in admiration of the taste and critical judgment of Italian literature displayed throughout the whole work: but I will not dilate upon it in a letter, I could talk for three hours to you and my aunt."

Elsewhere she speaks with the warmest admiration of a Simple Story. Jane Austen's books were not yet published; but another writer, for whom

Mr. Edgeworth and his daughter had a very great regard and admiration, was Mrs. Barbauld, who in all the heavy trials and sorrows of her later life found no little help and comfort in the friendship and constancy of Maria Edgeworth. Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld, upon Mr. Edgeworth's invitation, paid him a visit at Clifton, where he was again staying in 1799, and where Mrs. Edgeworth's eldest child was born. There is a little anecdote of domestic life at this time in the *Memoirs* which gives one a glimpse, not of an authoress, but of a very sympathising and impressionable person. "Maria took her little sister to bring down to her father, but when she had descended a few steps a panic seized her, and she was afraid to go either backwards or forwards. She sat down on the stairs afraid she should drop the child, afraid that its head would come off, and afraid that her father would find her sitting there and laugh at her, till seeing the footman passing she called 'Samuel' in a terrified voice, and made him walk before her backwards down the stairs till she safely reached the sitting room." For all these younger children Maria seems to have had a most tender and motherly regard, as indeed for all her young brothers and sisters of the different families. Many of them were the heroines of her various stories, and few heroines are more charming than some of Miss Edgeworth's. Rosamund is said by some to have been Maria herself, impulsive, warm-hearted, timid, and yet full of spirit and animation.

In his last letter to Mr. Edgeworth Dr. Darwin writes kindly of the authoress, and sends her a message. The letter is dated April 17, 1802. "I am glad to find you still amuse yourself with mechanism in spite of the troubles of Ireland;" and the Doctor goes on to ask his friend to come and pay a visit to the Priory, and describes the pleasant house with the garden, the ponds full of fish, the deep umbrageous valley, with the talkative stream running down it, and Derby tower in the distance. The letter, so kind, so playful in its tone, was never finished. Dr. Darwin was writing as he was seized with what seemed a fainting fit, and he died within an hour. Miss Edgeworth writes of the shock her father felt when the sad news reached him; a shock, she says, which must in some degree be experienced by every person who reads this letter of Dr. Darwin's.

No wonder this generous outspoken man was esteemed in his own time. To us, in ours, it has been given still more to know the noble son of "that giant brood," whose name will be loved and held in honour as long as people live to honour nobleness, simplicity, and genius; those things which give life to life itself.

A Glimpse of the United States.

THE number of British subjects who visit the United States for pleasure is increasing every year, but the attractions of that country are so numerous that it is surprising how small is the proportion of travellers from our shores who find their way across the Atlantic. We do not speak of the multitude of tourists who have neither time nor health for so long a journey. They naturally resort to the neighbouring capitals of Europe. They want immediate change from home pre-occupations, and this they find in visiting public galleries or spectacles, antiquarian remains, or historic monuments. They get rest and a certain amount of refined enjoyment, without acquiring or wishing for any special acquaintance with the people among whom they sojourn. They come back to the business of every-day life with some pleasant memories to muse over, and all the better pleased because there was nothing in their journey connected in any way with the thoughts that engage them in their own country. But for travellers less pressed for time, or less jaded in mind or body, the pleasures of a trip to America are as varied as they are real. Magnificent scenery, luxurious modes of travel, comfortable hotels, and a fine climate are no small advantages. For those who have not made a sea-voyage, and who are not incapable of enjoying one, the trip to New York is just long enough to give a delightful experience of the wonders of ocean with a very small degree of discomfort and danger.

Then there is more than luxurious existence and change of scene and variety of natural beauty to be enjoyed in this visit even by those who have not time or opportunity to make any study with American society properly so called. The mere superficial aspect of the people and the country is full of vivid interest for any one who is not too languid to care about history or politics or social organisation. The first existence of this continent, so far as Western knowledge goes, is a part of our modern history; the growth of the States was closely connected with some of the most remarkable events, political and religious, in our own country. Their commercial enterprises are all interwoven with our own. Their laws and institutions are all built on political principles with which our constitutional history teems; their actual stage of political development is that towards which we are told the old European countries are gravitating. In the economic conditions of the country we can see with our own eyes the working on an enormous scale of many of those doctrines of political economy which have engaged the minds of the greatest thinkers, and for our own observation we have the aid of a widely

extended press, the advantage of a language with which we are familiar. No more vivid intellectual enjoyment has been offered to the human mind since the days when Athens saw the habits and laws of the old Hellenic races mirrored in the life of Sicily and Magna Græcia. All the institutions of the country, all the shibboleths we hear repeated in the press, recall some stage of our history. We are reminded at one moment of Magna Charta and Simon de Montfort, at another of the Puritan revolution. Virginia recalls the time of Elizabeth and the martial aristocracy of England; Maryland, with its great martial Catholic establishments, the alliances that proved fatal to the house of Stuart; Pittsburgh, the scene of Washington's first military success, now the great manufacturing centre of the North, is a lasting monument of Chatham's most brilliant achievements. Each of the Northern States brings to mind some phase of that popular intellectual activity which, dating from the days of the Lollards, has presented itself in England under the various forms of Dissent.

An active traveller, whose special delight is scenery, might turn the American railway system to such account as to visit all the great natural wonders of the United States in a couple of months. A less fatiguing and more interesting course will be to take some one tract of the States at a time, and observe something of the ways of the population as well as of the natural scenery around. A line running from Boston to Montreal in Canada, from thence to St. Paul, then south by the valley of the Mississippi to the Ohio and east through the Alleghanies to Virginia, includes examples of all the important phases of American life except that of the Pacific coasts. We have within these limits one of the noblest of nature's works, the falls of Niagara, the fairy-like beauty of the Thousand Islands, the exciting passage of the Rapids, and these latter attractions are but adornments of the majestic current of the St. Lawrence, the greatest personality among the American rivers. The Hudson, with all its beauty, is an estuary, not a river. The Mississippi suggests a huge *dyke*, and we have to recall the thousands of miles it runs and the various climates it experiences before we realise that we are in the presence of the great father of waters; but on the St. Lawrence we are always conscious of the great effort of nature to carry the vast waters of the Northern lakes to the sea. Even within the limits above suggested the most picturesque aspect of the Mississippi may be enjoyed in Minnesota, where it rolls through a country that recalls some of the finest river scenery of Europe. At St. Louis it is already swollen to a mighty tide, and has acquired the character which it preserves for the next seven hundred miles to New Orleans and the Gulf of Mexico.

Pre-eminent as much of this scenery is among the marvels of nature, a still greater enjoyment is the observation of the people themselves, so variously occupied over this vast area in different stages of their work, the building up of the American nation. In such a circuit as we have

suggested we could contrast the fresh enterprise of Minneapolis and St. Paul with the splendid repose of Cincinnati and the old settled towns whose position was won eighty years since. In the former we have all the excitement of a battle yet to be won. In the latter, spacious streets filled with an orderly and not hurried commerce, extensive suburbs with palatial villas, and a general disposition to turn to the more luxurious side of life, attest the success already achieved. But the strongest impression we receive in America is the almost fantastic contrast between traditional associations which connect us with the people, and present habits and ways which mark them at once as a separate nation.

When the Englishman first looks at the waters of the Hudson dancing in the sun, the long smokeless streets, with their busy crowds certainly not of English people, his immediate impulse is to fall back on his earliest travelling companion, his scanty store of French, and to ask his way in that tongue. So strong is the impression of foreign locality which the climate and the aspect of the city give him, that it is some time before he becomes accustomed to expect to hear English from these tall, spare, keen-eyed men who talk so little, in so low a tone. When we meet Americans in Europe, their accent attracts attention; when we are among them, with climate and manners and dress and expression so different from our own, our surprise is to find them at home in our language. The spacious hall of the hotel is not reserved for the guests and the servants. It is filled by a busy crowd. Not that they are always moving about or talking. The men who sit in the armchairs against the wall or clustered round the pillars that support the dome, are not idle vacant-eyed loungers. They closely observe each passer-by, now and again glide through the crowd to claim an old acquaintance or to give attendance to a promised rendezvous. Loud talking is much more frequent among the women. In ordinary business the American is never noisy. He says little. It may be to the point or not, according to his good sense or honesty of purpose, but it is generally brief and always delivered in a quiet low key. As both good sense and honesty are leading characteristics of the American people, the exception here made to the general terseness of their ordinary communications is but an exception.

Hard as they work, they have, like other people, their social gatherings and their holidays. On these occasions no people are more chatty and sociable, as we know from our experience of them at this side of the Atlantic, as any traveller can prove for himself if he joins an excursion from Boston or Philadelphia; but before we are many days in the country we are struck by what Mr. Carlyle would recognise as a great gift of silence, a characteristic which American writers have often noticed, but which can only be appreciated among the people themselves. The peculiar humours of American life have often been described: the American story-teller, the captain of the Mississippi steamboat, the bar frequenter, the professional politician, what Mr. Matthew Arnold would

call the rowdy Philistine, have had many painters. What neither books nor our experience of Americans in Europe present to us are the habits and type of the working American, the merchant or trader in his daily life, whether in his ship or in his office, or travelling in search of custom or employment for his labour or his capital. His mind is so intently fixed on his object that he avoids all useless expenditure of thought or words. Restless he may be. He is seldom long in the same spot. He likes movement, even the motion of the rocking chair. He is never listless. Nothing escapes his vigilant eye; but it is a quiet, regulated vitality, too absorbed and earnest to be noisy. At the dinner-table of a great hotel you may occasionally hear a couple of veteran politicians discuss the signs of the times, or recall former struggles, or the young people of a family party may be encouraged by a few inquiries as to their tastes or plans of holiday; but generally, both with men and women, the meal-time is too important a part of their busy lives to be given up to idle conversation. The long, elaborate *menu* is scanned with close attention, a varied repast is ordered, and the rest of the time is devoted to its consumption. This is achieved with great rapidity, considering the number of dishes—say, for breakfast, various fruits, hominy, fish, meat, eggs, besides a variety of vegetables and cakes; but there is no greedy eagerness. It is an important piece of work steadily carried through, and once it is finished there is no loitering. The last mouthful swallowed and the finger-glasses used, the chairs are pushed back, and the guests glide swiftly off to the other occupations of life.

The lower part of New York abounds in fine scenery and memorable associations. As our steamer approaches the wharf after nightfall, one of those many steamers which bring back holiday-makers from the pleasure parks of Coney or Staten Islands, the lights gleaming on every side, reflected in the waters all around, remind us for a moment of the sea-encircled city of the Adriatic. In the morning sunshine, the width of these channels and the great navies riding in them recall us to modern commerce. The glade of tall trees in the Battery Gardens close by affords a pleasant contrast with the busy scene of the wharfs. Adjoining is the Bowling-Green, the centre of the city in colonial times. Its fine trees and quaint surroundings recall the days when Washington struggled with the Howes and the Clintons for the possession of the city.

We have hardly time to enjoy this locality before we become acquainted with some of those special traits which mark the American people all over the States. Within a few yards of this almost rural quiet we are in the Broadway and at the corner of Wall Street, the money market of the United States. The throng of eager business people traversing the streets reminds us of Lothbury rather than of the Rue Vivienne; but the scene becomes very different from either of these old-world quarters when we become familiar with the demeanour of the individuals who make up the stirring crowd. The sense of personal independence is already visible in a thousand ways, and when we

get to see what this bearing means it has all the enjoyment of a new experience.

If we enter a shop, we do not find that deferential welcome which London offers; rather a critical, inquiring attitude, as of men—we think—who recollect that a chance customer like ourselves may be, perhaps, no better than he should be. We soon find that this undemonstrative observant demeanour only indicates the intention of the shopman to ascertain our wants as thoroughly and quickly as possible, and supply them without delay. There is no time lost in ceremony; our demands are met with promptness and quiet civility. The shopkeepers assume that we, like themselves, want to get through the work with as little delay as is consistent with finding what we want. The shopman—or clerk, as he is termed—and the shoeblick are the merchant and the railway director and the statesman in an earlier stage, and they do their immediate business with thoroughness and confidence, like people who feel that they are bearing their part in the larger and higher conceptions of life, and will, if they do themselves justice, be one day as comfortable and important as any of their customers. In the American clerk or workman of to-day, whatever may have been the case in the past, there is no vulgar assertion of this equality. The people he has to deal with ordinarily never dream of disputing it. It is only in the case of a European, accustomed to the subservience of the productive or distributing classes here, that any embarrassment can arise. We soon learn that the absence of the deference we are accustomed to does not mean disrespect: it is an unconscious compliment. It is giving us credit for a knowledge of their social system; it assumes that we are aware there is no social inferiority between the wealthy merchant and landowner and the labourer or clerk; it attributes to us some of their own good sense to conclude that we want our business done, and done well, without loss of time.

Upon the lower order of labourers this influence is particularly beneficial—people who do the work of cabmen and porters, and what we call day labourers. Amongst these people there is a general absence of that roughness and rowdyism which mark the same class with us when their temper is disturbed. In the course of one's travels occasional disputes arise, and there is the usual amount of petty knavery; but nowhere do we meet with that insolence which almost invariably accompanies a dispute with the same class here. Bad language is hardly ever heard, even in the North-West. Certainly there is much less of it there than among the young men of fashion in New York, who seem to think that a certain amount of damning this and that proves a familiarity with European habits.

One noteworthy result of this spirit of self-respect is that the traveller is not called on to spend time and money in distributing largesses to small railway and hotel employés. Another effect which we can trace to the same root idea, is an attention to personal tidiness much greater

than among the same class with us. In a few weeks in the United States we see more shoe-blackening and brushing-up than perhaps in all the rest of our lives. Everybody does rough work now and again, and the fact that they do hard work is no reason why they should not make themselves tidy and comfortable when the work is over. A curious sight it is to walk down Broadway just as the shops and warehouses are about to close, when the assistants may be seen at the doorways waiting in a group round a shoeblack, who has been retained to complete their toilet before they start for their respective abodes—go “up town,” or, as we should say, “go west.” In the same way, hotels and railway trains and stations abound in convenient lavatories, and travelling is carried on with a consideration for cleanliness and appearance which is not general in Europe. This comes partly, no doubt, from the greater practice in travelling which the habits of the Americans give them, but is also in a great measure due to their disposition not to give way to circumstances. They are too conscious of their dignity and position as American citizens to be put out of countenance by material difficulties, and they gain the habit of making shift as best they can. Rough travelling, or coarse and dirty work, is nothing to be ashamed of; and the man who knows what cleanliness and order are, asserts his natural taste on the first opportunity.

Of the cosmopolitan world of New York the hurried traveller may be able to see but little. That little, however, will probably convince him that he has fresher fields of observation elsewhere. The fashion of the Atlantic cities has many attractions, but, with a dash and daring and lavishness all its own, it is strongly modelled on European habits. Perhaps its least interesting characteristic is the disposition to convince strangers that these Americans of the eastern cities are not as other Americans, but have European tastes and experiences. It is not that they are ashamed of their own country. The spirit of national pride in their present strength and the great career before them is never absent in any American, but one does frequently find among the wealthier classes a disposition to accept European ways simply because they are European, and without discriminating judgment as to whether they are nobler or better ways—ways that tend to make life more worthy or beautiful. Instead of treating their own social habits as a basis on which to superadd good things from other places, they strike a European as too apt to run after an imitation of European manners and customs, and the result is a contrast, an opposition to the home life of the country, instead of such an engrafting of the ways of old countries in harmony with the natural life of America as might give us much to learn from. As it is, a combination of business energy and restlessness, with close imitation of French and English ways, is not fascinating, and seems little likely to produce any good result for America or for the rest of the world.

In Chicago and the North-West we are away from this Europeanising influence. There we have the American people carrying on with full vigour the work which they have been engaged in for some two hundred

years under the lead of the New England populations. It is the younger sons of families from Massachusetts and Connecticut who settled Illinois, as they settled Ohio and Indiana long before, as they are settling Minnesota and Dakota now, and establishing themselves in Wyoming and Montana. Chicago has been founded a long time, and is a vast metropolis in its wealth and extent, but still it is the settler's city. It has preserved all the freshness and buoyancy of a new establishment. Its scheme is to be the big city of America, owing to its central position among the regions which are mines of agricultural wealth to be worked as soon as hands are found for the task. Chicago is not content to be the great commercial city of Illinois or the emporium of the lakes. It is to be the centre of all the United States territory between the Rocky Mountains and Pennsylvania, and as much of that country has yet to be filled, Chicago cannot assume yet her position as a city whose victories have been won. She is still provisional only, for a population to come, and thus in the midst of great wealth and conveniences of every kind, crowded with majestic buildings, Chicago preserves for our observation all the notes of a people camping out. We have exchanges, theatres, fashionable quarters and suburbs, and of course innumerable lines of tramcars; but that is nothing, for there is hardly an American village without a line of tramcars, but from the newsboy to the wealthy merchant all are full of the one idea how Chicago is to be made what it ought to be, the commercial centre of the West. It has a great variety of inhabitants of the most remote nationalities; Russians and Poles, Frenchmen and Germans, Irish and Scotch, are neighbours in its wide suburbs; but the dominant influence is the enterprise and order of the Eastern States. Though there are plenty of elements of rowdiness, and so many changes have come over men's minds since the time of Roger Williams that every freedom is given to separate opinions or religious observances, still the energy and sober self-respect of New England prevail over all. The resolution of the old colonists who founded Providence and New Haven and Boston is animating this vast multitude in conditions so prodigiously different, with steam and electricity connecting it to all parts of the world, and an organised press stimulating the passion of notoriety. The old colonists belonged to one race, one creed, it might be said one congregation. The North-West opens its arms to all races, to all religions, be they ecclesiastical or simply subjective, but it is one with the Pilgrim Fathers in its resolution to win the earth and use it worthily, and with this purpose and love of toil comes a friendly brotherhood between these widely differing groups. They contribute information, they contribute help to each other with a ready aptness more touching than anything which more refined manners could present. They are all fellow-labourers together, and thus they have a unity of purpose and a common sympathy springing from that unity which enable them to supply each other's wants without fuss or parade. In travelling by railroad or steamboat this may be observed at every turn, little civilities done by one passenger to

another, arranging their packages, opening or shutting a window, calling attention to something mislaid so promptly and silently, and acknowledged only by a word, an appreciating glance, as almost to escape notice from the looker-on.

All their kindly acts come in the course
Of nature, not as efforts meant to please.

As regards women in particular, this vigilant helpful forethought of the American mind has special charms. There is hardly any subject on which more dreary nonsense is talked and written than on the position and demeanour of American women. Their beauty, we are told, is due to the life of ease and splendour which the wealth and intelligence and chivalry of their country produce. They are free from the family worries, from the financial anxieties, which vex the women of the Old World. Even the physical burdens which most women are subject to, riches and science have reduced to a minimum. All that is required of them is to be beautiful and receive the grateful homage of mankind. That there are plenty of handsome women who live in magnificent houses with almost absolute command of their own time as far as household duties are concerned, that they occupy themselves much with society, its amusements, and occasionally with various schemes for remodelling social habits—all this is true, but it only refers to a very small portion of the Eastern States, and a portion of which the present influence or the future development appears very uncertain. So far as this position of some American women in the Eastern States is not the usual concomitant of wealth, and has any connection with the special life of the country, it is due to what we see in a much more distinct and beautiful form in the simpler districts, the primitive vigour which the family relations still retain, and the consequent ready helpfulness of men towards women. The word "tender" suggests itself, but tender does not describe the demeanour and habits which make a great beauty of these half-populated regions. There is no self-consciousness about them, there is no posing, there is no particular satisfaction apparently in giving help to a woman rather than a man. These ways are only a part of the vigilant sense of community of interest which we see evident all around. All there are fellow-workers, the woman is the less strong, more naturally requires attention and aid, and she gets them with promptness, and without obtrusiveness, at every hand. No doubt in these Western States the women have a great deal of hard work, but it is work which the spirit of invention and the accumulations of the Eastern States have stripped of its more grievous characteristics. Machinery and the most various household appliances have come to the aid of the woman, and enable her without excessive physical toil to take an active part in the enterprise of her husband or her brother, and her sense of community with him is ever fresh and vigorous. Although most of the women are married, and children come in abundance, the cares of

domestic life and the business of the husband occupy alike the attention of both parents, the woman ever vigilant and sympathetic, and taking some share, according to her power, of the actual work.

One of the most interesting of these Western towns is St. Paul, situated in the picturesque scenery of the Upper Mississippi. The site has been wrested from the Indians within living memory. In 1854 its population was three thousand. Now it is seventy thousand. Mills and great warehouses are rising on both sides of the river, and New England influences are more conspicuous than in Chicago. The great tide of European emigration has not yet flowed up to this place sufficiently to obscure the original settler spirit. In its main streets and suburbs handsome traps abound, and nearly all of them are driven by women. The men are busy in the mills and stores. The marketing, the communications between one point and another, all this is lighter work, and by a natural economy is left to their bright and active helpmates.

It is one result of the great productive activity of the people, that the accumulations which their industry has brought together fill their thoughts and are presented in their conversation much more frequently than among ourselves. Idle gossip here notes a man who has been a double-first, or has a beautiful place in Kent, or a fine gallery of pictures, or is of noted descent, be it from some politician or soldier or lawyer. Many and various are the claims to attention put forward in the ordinary gossip of a watering-place, but in the States every one we notice is "immensely rich;" sometimes the adverb varies and it is "enormously rich;" or a more ambitious conversationist will tell you that the husband of the charming lady whom you sat next to at dinner is worth millions, but admiration of success in getting the reward of industry, an accumulation of dollars, becomes a sort of mental law. The men apply it, the women talk about it, and the word "rich," with various adverbs and qualifications, occurs in conversation almost as often as "doch" in a German dialogue. It would be hard to imagine how their conversation would go on without it. The traveller is struck with a baby's beautiful eyes. The lady sitting near sympathises with his admiration, and her own fine eyes lighting up with unwonted animation, she adds in a voice thrilling with emotion, "Do you know that he is heir to millions?" Her sympathetic enjoyment of the baby's beauty and her admiration for the millions go quite well together in her mind. The sense of beauty is the natural outcome of a fine-toned sensitive nature, but it is stimulated by the consideration of practical results habitual to her nation. The physical appreciation of beauty is intensified by the idea of millions representing great labours and achievements, giving promise of still vaster and nobler exertions of human energy in the future. This tendency to dwell on the fact of riches would in an old country be offensive and degrading, for in Europe there are many other calls upon our time, many other ways marked for service and distinction besides material development. In the United States this language does not indicate

avarice or cupidity. Misers are probably more rare than in Europe. The most magnificent donations for public purposes are made every day. Vulgar fawning upon wealth is comparatively unknown. This language is the natural outcome of two circumstances, the one accidental, the other closely connected with the moral grandeur of the people. The first is the ready means of acquiring wealth which the climate and the fresh soil supply; the second is the nervous energy which impels every American, as it were by instinct, to push on, each to do his part and make the best of this splendid opportunity.

Another accident of American habits which we can only understand among the people themselves is their warm interest in everything relating to kings and nobles. In the mind of the Briton there is always lurking a genuine awe for hereditary rank. Sometimes it reacts in militant denunciation of all aristocracy, sometimes it is veiled in decorous subserviency, and by the Briton accordingly the American rush in pursuit of a live lord is regarded as the grossest flunkeyism. This is altogether a mistake. To the American the hereditary noble is the most foreign of foreign products. In his own country he can observe for himself almost anything else which goes to make up the public life of history. He is not a book man, he is not a philosopher. Books he uses, but his great reliance in the battle of life are his exceedingly acute faculties of observation, and he is glad of the opportunity to see for himself what sort of being this old-country institution produces. The noble captive receives hearty attention, generous hospitality; so would any other European whom the American took an interest in. In the attention paid to European rank there is nothing of that fawning, of that reverential attitude which we so often observe in the middle class at home. With a lord in chase the American may pass by ever so many accomplished and able commoners. But accomplished and able men he can observe in his own country. The hereditary noble is a piece of history for which he has to go abroad. If we want an analogue for this phenomenon which the Englishman so often mistakes for an indelicate presentation of the feeling so dear to his own heart, it is to be found in the objects to which a cultivated visitor would direct his attention in India or China. Such a visitor would be far more interested in the ways and mode of thought of any native gentlemen whom difficulties of language might enable him to become acquainted with, than in the best society which Anglo-Oriental rank and statesmanship could give him.

A great field of observation is the general sentiment which pervades the religious bodies in America. The various communions of the United States are the offspring of the most rigid of dissenting bodies, and the taste for external religious observances is still powerful. Sunday in most American communities is observed as strictly as in an English country village or in Scotland. But notwithstanding the narrowness of their religious traditions, the confidence with which they claim from their neighbours acquiescence in many of their observances and opinions,

the European observer is astonished at the comparative seclusion from public attention of doctrinal distinctions. The writings of Dean Stanley are favourite text-books in Presbyterian schools and colleges. The ordinary doctrines of Deism, a respect for Sunday and the Bible, are a common ground on which all the Christian sects are willing to meet without troubling themselves about details, and this latter point of respect for the Bible is rather a formal recognition of that ancient source of Christian teaching than any profession of personal study of the book. That intimate knowledge of the text of Scripture which we find so frequently amongst Presbyterians at home, and in one degree or another among most of the British dissenting communities, is not common in America. They have sufficient personal knowledge of the book to appreciate any amount of biblical literature, sermons, disquisitions on the Bible; illustrations of it are followed with attention; but there is nothing like the same familiarity with the actual text of Scripture which we find among many old-world communities with much less pretension to prosperity and well-being. That this comparative neglect of the letter of the Bible has produced the greater expansiveness of their religious opinions is not here suggested. In trying to explain that larger freedom of thought, whilst we are struck on all sides with the absence of higher speculative activity, we come round to the great cardinal fact which lies at the base of so many things in the habits and history of this people, their geographical position. The masters of a great continent richly endowed by nature, they are engaged in spreading over it a prosperous humanity, without social miseries, without the bloodshed which mark the rise of nearly all other nations. This thought of the splendid career which nature has provided for the people fills the minds of all Americans, from the workman to the great financier. This continentalism, if we may be allowed to adopt a term in contrast with that insular feeling, with that contentment with a restricted idea from which the British mind too often suffers, finds expression among a comparatively unlettered people in big phrases that excite our derision. Allusions to the oceans which wash their continent, to the mighty rivers which traverse it, to the rising and the setting sun, to the expectant ages awaiting their efforts, sound empty mouthing to us, but they appeal to the American's large and generous pride in himself and his fellow-citizens. There is room for all in the great work which nature has assigned him. No man who is orderly can be his enemy or even his rival. The great nature around him bids him seek points of union, not of difference. The newness of his national birth, the dignity and splendour of his national career, the enormous influence which the mere size of the work he is now doing must have in modifying the future history of the world—all those considerations occupy his thoughts in preference to the subtleties of former times. His religion is an active moderating force upon his life, but he expects it to work in with the great purposes which fill his imagination, rather than to divert him from his

proper business. Last autumn Dr. Beecher reopened his church at Brooklyn with a sermon which illustrated the marvellous way in which this religious teaching connects itself with the habits and thoughts of the people. His text was from Matthew—"In this place is one greater than the temple." These famous words have served through many ages for those who would exalt spiritual above material things. In the mouths of the Mystics, in the mouths of the Trinitarians, they have had various significations. In the mouth of the Baptist orator they introduced a splendid panegyric upon individuality. All the mental habits of criticism, of self-assertion, of dauntless antagonism to aggressive authority which the practice of popular liberty, the struggle of personal competition had formed, were elevated into a noble creed of moral independence. The great preacher seized the floating, half-formed thoughts of his vast congregation and gathered them into a mighty tide to carry his hearers onwards towards a more exalted idea of their powers, their duties and responsibilities, to their country and their age. He appealed to their pride, their habits as free citizens of a great country, to make these old words from Galilee glow with a new meaning which should teach his hearers in their everyday life to cherish a sympathy with divine things. Before this idea of the great career of a citizen of the United States, the energies it evokes, the habits of order and self-denial which it inculcates, the sympathies it brings into play—in face of all this the controversies of theology become questions of individual conscience. The general principle of liberty secures every respect for them, but still they are considerations for the individual rather than for the community.

This paper is not concerned with any study of American politics at the present time, but some observations of the Americans at home suggest a few remarks on the speculations we hear about American policy in Europe. These dissertations are largely founded on a study of the American press, and, although newspapers are so numerous and many of them so able, there is probably no country with Western institutions where newspapers are so little influential. One might travel all over the Eastern States without finding a single individual who regards a statement in type with that stupid simplicity so common in this country. Belief in the veracity of the newspaper is as little known as respect for the patriotism and wisdom of the public man. The American is much less of a reader of books than is generally supposed. He wants his newspaper to bring him the intelligence of the day, the state of the markets, and so forth. The political article helps him to judge how certain political combinations are working. If the paper adds a social essay or a scandalous family history, or a column of verse, these contributions supply him some mental entertainment. He may note the scandal, but he never thinks of believing it because he has seen it in print.

The language of the press is no indication that Americans, in our times at least, are likely to vary from the characteristics which have

hitherto marked them, a clear-sighted common-sense pursuit of their own interests, and a national pride too confident and deep-seated to be passionate. Washington's influence over the destinies of America was mainly due to the fact that his mind, notwithstanding special attributes arising from accidents of social position and training, was thoroughly characteristic of the people of his day, and it is not splendid range of imagination, generous enthusiasm, which have made Washington illustrious, but resolution, common sense, sublime patience. Notwithstanding all the changes which time and immigration have wrought and are working in the American people, these are still their predominant characteristics. Men who one day prophesy great effects from the Irish element among them, tell us the next that German influence will be in the ascendant, and will infallibly destroy American traditions. There is a certain jealousy of German ways among New England populations. In politics, however, the German immigrants rapidly follow New England teachings, and their adoption of American social habits is nearly exactly in proportion to their progress in wealth. In art, on the other hand, they are spreading through the States a most useful influence. However low we may place German standards of taste in many respects, in music they are supreme, and New England has no natural taste for music; but German influence is carrying a popular taste for music far and wide through the population of the North-West. With music will certainly come an artistic spirit which may give us great achievements in the future, an art and literature springing from the resources of the people developed in harmony with the influences of climate and tradition, and not a mere imitation of Europe.

The reader is not encouraged to visit the States in order to find new ideas in politics, philosophy, or art, but to enjoy the intellectual treat of observing the growth of a new people, and the practical sufficiency with which they supply their political wants, whilst they secure a large enjoyment of individual liberty. Among the masses we find familiar knowledge of complex political ideas and the most widely diffused personal well-being. Not only are these millions well fed and well clothed, but they understand in one degree or another how by their individual industry and obedience to law they contribute to the prosperity of each other. We may not be able to carry away from America any social inventions which we can apply elsewhere; but apart from one's natural satisfaction at the sight of material happiness on the grandest scale, we can see with our own eyes that the America of to-day has secured for labour a comfort and dignity unexampled in the history of the world. Perhaps in the future she may go on to show how the enjoyment of riches may be made more noble and beautiful.

Some Solar and Lunar Myths.

“WHAT makes mythology mythological in the true sense of the word,” says Professor Max Müller, “is what is utterly unintelligible, absurd, strange, or miraculous.”* The explanation, according to his theory, of the irrationality of mythology is quite distinct from that of its origin, and must be sought for in the influence of language over thought, which gradually turns what was once full of meaning into absurdity and utter nonsense. Thus, to take an instance, *Tsui-goab*, the Hottentot name for the Supreme Being, which now means Wounded Knee, meant originally the Red Dawn, the two words which at first connoted the latter idea having come in time to connote the former, so that what was once clear in reference to the highest supernatural power conceived of by the Hottentots has come to have no meaning at all, and to call into existence for the purpose of explanation all sorts of stories of a once powerful sorcerer who wounded his knee in conflict with an enemy. The word *Tsui*, we are told, generally means sore, but may also mean red or bloody; whilst the word *goab* is from a root *goa*, to walk or approach, whence *goa-b*= he comes, or the comer, or the goer; the latter meaning leading further to the meaning of a knee, and the word *goab* being also used to mean the day, and more particularly the approaching day.

Into the value of this explanation of the myth of *Tsui-goab* it were useless to enter without a knowledge of the Hottentot language, which only a lifetime among Hottentots could give; but according to Professor Max Müller there is only one rival theory to this of the influence of language over thought in the formation of mythology, and that is the theory generally associated with the name of Euhemerus, which interprets the irrational as a matter of actual fact, and ascribes its origin to some real incident in human life. This other theory, for instance, would explain *Tsui-goab* as having really been a man who wounded his knee, and who for the wonders performed by him in his life came after his death to be worshipped as a divinity.

This explanation, too, may have much to recommend it; but there is yet a third explanation which Professor Max Müller has not noticed, and which accounts in one and the same way both for the origin and for the absurdities of mythology, by the theory that mythology is in its essence and from first to last irrational, there being nothing in its wildest flights which does not naturally commend itself as true and likely to uncivilised as to infantine humanity. If, for instance, Cronus devours his

* “Hottentot Mythology,” in *Nineteenth Century* for January 1882.

own children, it is because it once seemed a very likely thing for Zeus to do. "Such absurdities," says a writer on the Maories of New Zealand, "as would only amuse infants in Europe serve to delight and illuminate the most venerable auditory ;" * and what is true of the Maories may presumably pass as true for other savages, or even for the far-off ancestors of the Aryans. In other words, irrational mythology is the natural product of irrational minds acting on all the multiform objects that their senses bring within the range of their observation.

The survival of such irrational explanations of things into later and more civilised times contains nothing of mystery, for in every stage of development the most irrational tales, if they have but the seal of antiquity and of a large circulation of belief, more commend themselves as true to the vast majority of mankind than theories of a later date which carry no prescriptive title to acceptance. They have in fact that inherent strength which belongs to everything that has time on its side, forming a kind of aristocracy of opinion, against which science beats to little purpose, and in a manner that recalls the efforts of all parvenus to pass the closed barriers of privilege.

This hypothesis, without any resort to the depraving influence of language over thought, will sufficiently explain how it was that the absurdities of Greek mythology (certainly unsurpassed for such absurdities by any mythology in the world) remained current among a people whose civilisation in many other respects has never since been equalled. That it was only the higher minds of ancient Greece to whom the stories of Homer and Hesiod did not afford the most complete satisfaction, or by whom they were not most implicitly believed, is better proved by no single fact than by the indirect attack made upon them by Plato in the construction of his imaginary Republic. It is the strongest proof of the vitality of the Greek myths that a philosopher, living so comparatively late as Plato, should have still found it necessary to protest, and that on behalf of a fictitious and not a real community, against such tales as the chaining of Hera by her son, or the flinging of Hephæstus out of heaven for trying to take his mother's part when his father was beating her.

A few instances of the fancies still current in Europe, and more especially in Germany, about the sun and moon, will help to show how the same general law is still a condition of mental progress, serving to keep alive beliefs that would have been thought worth noting even if found among Maories or Hottentots. These fancies may perhaps be dying out, but that they should still be discoverable at all illustrates the pertinacity with which the irrational speculations of primitive philosophy are clung to for ages, and indicates the real mental satisfaction which they have always afforded, and still afford, to countless numbers of our fellow-creatures.

A writer on the literature of the Slavonic nations speaks of the stars

* Polack, *Manners and Customs of New Zealanders*, ii. 172.

and planets as sympathising with human beings and living in constant intercourse with them and their affairs, and he quotes the story of a beautiful maiden who, because she boasted of herself as more beautiful than the sun, was burnt coal-black by that revengeful luminary.* The Jews of old believed that the sun, moon, and stars danced before Adam in Paradise, and that at the end of the world they would do so again in the presence of the just.† And these are conceptions it were easy to parallel from the modern beliefs of many savage tribes. But the abundant collection of German folk-lore which the last half-century owes to many of the ablest writers in Germany lends perhaps even a better support to the theory suggested above, that there is no idea so extravagant as to be incapable not merely of ready acceptance in a savage state, but of a firm hold on men's minds long after they have passed into more civilised modes of living, and cast off in all outer respects the common characteristics of barbarism.

In the German language, as is well known, the genders of the sun and moon are respectively feminine and masculine, contrary to the rule of the Romance languages, where, as in Latin, the sun is masculine and the moon feminine. In our own language Shakspeare speaks of the moon as 'she;' and in Egypt and Peru the sun and moon were regarded both as brother and sister and as husband and wife. In Arabic, Mexican, Lithuanian, Slavonic, and Greenlandish, the moon and sun, according to Grimm, are related as in German. The variation of gender implies, of course, a difference of thought, but the fundamental conception that gave them genders at all in language or in legend is clearly the same in either case, namely, that the sun and moon were actual human beings like ourselves. This thought still lingers in the Upper Palatinate of Bavaria, where it is still common, or was recently, to hear the sun spoken of as *Frau Sonne* and the moon as *Herr Mond*.‡ But yet more strange than this is the fact that in the same district the tale should still survive which accounts in the following commonplace but suggestive way for the genders of the luminaries in question:—The moon and sun were man and wife, but the moon proving too cold a lover and too much addicted to sleep, his wife one day laid him a wager, by virtue of which the right of shining by day should belong in future to whichever of them should be the first to awake. The moon laughed, but accepted the wager, and awoke next day to find that the sun had for two hours already been lighting up the world. As it was also a condition and consequence of their agreement that unless they awoke at the same time they should shine at different times, the effect of the wager was a permanent separation—much to the affliction of the triumphant sun, who, still retaining a spouse-like love for her husband, was and always is trying to repair the matrimonial breach. Eclipses are really due to their meetings

* Talvj, *Language and Literature of Slavic Nations*, 327.

† Eisenmenger, *Entdecktes Judenthum*, i. 47-8.

‡ Schönwerth, *Aus der Oberpfalz*, ii. 51.

for the purpose of reconciliation ; but as the pair always begin with mutual reproaches, the time comes for them to part before they have ceased to quarrel ; and on that account the sun goes away blood-red with anger, and the tears of blood she weeps at her departure are often marked in the sky by the redly-setting sun.*

Can anything be more absurd than this, and yet more in keeping with the promptings of mental childishness that we might naturally associate with the beginnings of our race? And is it not more likely that some such story or belief should have given birth to the distinctive genders of the two luminaries, or, in other words, that the thought should have produced the peculiarity of language, than that a primitive distinction in language, in itself unaccountable, should have given birth to so irrational a story? The genders of other things betray how deep-seated and all-pervading this conception of the universe once was. Everything existent was apparently once regarded as human, or thought of under human attributes, of which may be quoted as a good illustration the incident in the mythical history of Balder in the Edda ; whom to protect from danger, his mother, the goddess Freja, exacted an oath that they would spare his life from water, fire, earth, stones, plants, animals, birds, worms, and even from pestilences, only exempting from the oath one small bush, the mistletoe, not because it was not as human as the rest, but because it was too young to appreciate so solemn a formality. And when Balder died, meeting his death from the disregarded mistletoe, beasts, plants, and stones lamented him equally with mankind.† And with this we may compare the old German theory of storms, that they were caused by a dispute between the sea and the sky concerning the beauty of the eyes of a certain giantess.‡

If we wonder how the remotest resemblance could ever have been detected between the human form and the celestial bodies, we have only to observe our own children to see how the smallest point of similarity between things is amply sufficient very often for an inference of complete identity. If, therefore, the sun or moon suggested an eye or a face, the want of body, legs, and arms would be immaterial to an unscientific observer. But be this as it may, there seems little doubt that the inference of identity was made, and in sober faith, not in poetry nor fancy.

We plume ourselves perhaps too readily in modern times on the advantages we have over our ancestors in the feast of romance in which the invention of printing enables us to live. For they had only to lift their eyes to heaven to read, writ there in language of easy decipherment, all the common incidents of gossip and scandal. Given once the idea of the sun and moon as a married couple, to what issues and situations does not such an idea lend itself and lead! First of all would

* Schönwerth, *Aus der Oberpfalz*, ii. 57-9 ; and Mannhardt, *Götterwelt*, 104-5.

† Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, 613.

‡ Schönwerth, ii. 264.

come naturally the old Prussian belief that the stars were their offspring, and, next to that, the legend that the moon proved faithless to his wife and eloped with the betrothed of the morning star, for which the god of thunder, to punish him, cut him in two with a sharp knife, as may still be seen in the moon's shape at certain times.*

In Bavaria a similar tale appears in a more elaborate form. A girl who spun in the moonlight, having been drawn up by the moon, was the source of a good deal of jealousy to the sun as soon as she became aware of the moon's faithlessness to herself. She therefore spying the girl's lover asleep in a wood, and in order to be even with the moon, took him up to herself. The girl and her lover then perceiving themselves thus remote from one another, were naturally anxious to meet again; and a great grief it was to the moon when he found that the spinning girl no longer cared for him, but still thought of her original lover. The tears he sheds in consequence are what we call the shooting stars.†

Another old legend of the shooting stars akin to this last one is that they are the dust which falls from the head of a giantess as she combs her hair with the moon's crescent.‡ The skies, too, according to the same philosophy, were once starless, till the giants who were of old took to throwing balls at the sun, and so pierced holes in the sky and let through the light which was originally behind it. The moon's phases were accounted for by the supposition of an old giant too feeble to walk, who mounted the moon as he rose, but who rode him so heavily that, after every such ride, the moon's sides were so much pressed in that time was required to make the moon full again.‡

The theory that the sun and moon were once literally believed to be human, is not inconsistent with the likelihood of some myths about them occurring from the natural confusion of thought which might arise from calling human beings after the heavenly bodies.

Children called Sun and Moon, as Antony, to the great offence of the Romans, called some twins of his and Cleopatra, evidently afford suitable food for mythology; and, according to one tradition, the peasant, who for profaning a holy day was translated to the moon, was really a man who when on earth had been called Moon by his wife and all his acquaintances. Before his departure he had promised his wife that he would return to fetch her, so that when he appeared at her window, she at once recognised him and asked without discomposure, "Is it you, Moon?" "Yes," replied that orb, "I was moon on earth, and am still and must be for eternity. If you will come, dress warmly, for it is cold in my company." So his wife took her wooden shoes and fur, and went to the moon, where she may still be seen dressed in her fur after midnight.§

But the occasional naming of people after the heavenly bodies,

* "Tettau and Temme"—*Volksagen Ostpreussens*, 28.

† Schönwerth, ii. 59-61.

‡ *Ib.* iii. 263. § *Ib.* ii. 68.

though it might account for the mixture of human incidents in many a solar or lunar myth, evidently supposes those bodies to have been already named; and the myths told of them in their human capacity would be rather such as might be told of any mortal than of any mortal in particular. The transference of their names to mortals might add to the resources of mythological absurdity, but would not create them; the primary element in those resources being a real belief in the virtual identity of all things, as also in their voluntary convertibility. We may evidently get deep into absurdity, if the sun, for instance, besides being a woman, may at the same time be as easily thought of as a cow, a wolf, or a wheel, or anything else of common mundane experience.

A Danish tradition makes the moon a cheese, formed of the milk that has run together out of the Milky Way! * In the Pyrenees a hailstorm may be averted by frightening a black cloud with the sight of its own face in a mirror held up to it! † And a Cypriot myth, seemingly of later date than Christianity, shows how little such crude thoughts change: the moon being in Cyprus called Venus barbata, because she once, to avoid a lover's ardour, prayed for help to the Virgin, and received, to protect her, a beard like a man's! ‡

The belief in the power of the sun or moon as persons to take up to them human beings from earth may next be shown to have had, more perhaps than any other primary belief of humanity, an influence over mythology, which may be traced to this day in some of the most popular of our superstitions and some of our most widely-spread legends.

Two stories are worth quoting to show that in primitive belief the sun equally with the moon possesses the power of abducting human kind. The Greeks of modern Epirus have a tale of a childless woman, who, having prayed to the sun for a girl, gained her request, subject only to the girl's restoration at the age of twelve. When Tetiko had reached that age and was one day picking vegetables in the garden, whom should she meet but the sun. That luminary bade her go and remind her mother of her promise. The mother in terror and consternation shut the doors and windows to keep her child safe; but unfortunately she forgot the keyhole, by which entrance the sun penetrated and succeeded in carrying off his prey. §

The other story is from Germany. A prisoner was on his way to execution, and an object of pity to all whom he passed; but one woman, who was hanging up her linen to dry on the rays of the sun, maintained that he well deserved his fate. Hardly had she said so when her linen fell down, nor was she ever able to hang it again upon her former drying-place. And when she died she came to the sun, where she must remain as long as the world endures. ||

* Rochholz, *Naturmythen*, 253.

† Mannhardt, *Feld-Kulte*, 20.

‡ Rochholz, 249.

§ Hahn, *Griechische Märchen*, i. 245.

|| Schambach, *Niedersächsische Sagen*, 67.

Nevertheless many more stories have been kept alive of some man or woman in the moon than of any mortal present in the sun—a fact which we may perhaps attribute to the stronger appearance of such presence afforded by the shadows of the great night light than by anything to suggest it in the orb of day.

The common account of the man in the moon, that he is the individual whom the Israelites stoned for gathering sticks on the Sabbath, is probably only a modernised version of a much older story. The earliest form of the many similar stories seems to be that the moon as a man, and a far-seeing one, has a power over mankind which he can exercise at will for their hurt or punishment. In the Edda, the moon takes up two children, who were doing nothing more than carrying water-pots on their shoulders. In Swabia, children who look out of window are still sometimes cautioned against being carried off by the man in the moon; nor are they allowed, in imitation of the hare in the moon, to make the figure of a hare on the walls with their fingers. In the same district, the sin of the man in the moon was simply that of working in his vineyard by moonlight; whilst, according to another version, a woman was taken up for spinning at her window by moonlight, and her flax and hair may still be seen there. To this day this primitive idea of sin against the moon exists in Swabia, where it is still thought sinful to spin or sew in the moonlight, and it is a common thing to hear it said, "Leave off working, or you will go to the moon."*

Stories therefore of the moon which connect the punishment of a residence there with offences against morality or Christian ordinances, may be supposed to have less antiquity than those which connect it either with no sin at all or with sin against the moon itself. For instance, such stories as the Bohemian one, that the moon, having warned a thief against stealing peas, took him up when he persisted in doing so; † or the Tirolese and German tales, that the moon carried off a rascal who went about at night sticking sheep with a fork, or who held brambles before the moon to conceal his theft of a horse, of cabbages, cherries, fish, or cheese—seem to be the adaptation of a more primitive belief to a changed and somewhat advanced state of thought rather than the expression of the earliest notions on the subject. The further addition to these stories that the thief or profane Sabbath-breaker bears his load of cabbages or sticks for all eternity, as an eternal warning to mankind, seems an additional corroboration of this hypothesis.

These and similar facts, such as not pointing at the new moon, are sometimes thought to be survivals of an old form of moon-worship. But why were the sun and moon worshipped at all? Surely not so much from their being regarded as symbols of light, or fire, or heat, as from human attributes once ascribed to them with fear and dread. The belief in their humanity would easily pass into that of their divinity,

* Meier, *Sagen aus Schwaben*, 229.

† Grohmann, *Aberglauben aus Böhmen*, 29.

and with that would come every form of propitiatory worship and sacrifice, even to the horrible human sacrifices of Mexico. So late as the seventh century, St. Eligius found it necessary to preach against the practice of speaking of the moon as our Lord; and a legend of Christian times has it that the moon is actually Mary Magdalene, and the spots on her face the tears of her repentance.*

The idea of the sun and moon as *persons* having power to punish mortals by carrying them off, would next pass into the idea of either of them as actual *places* of punishment, an idea which in time would tend to prevail over the original idea of them as actual personalities. In the same way the Norse goddess of death, Hel, who received the souls of all who died in her subterranean abode, after contact with Christian ideas, gradually lost her personality, and became not merely the receptacle of the dead, but the *place* where they were punished; and in the same way Hades and Orcus are said to have been persons before they were places.† In many of the lunar myths the moon appears—as also does the sun in the case of the pitiless washerwoman—rather as the place of punishment than the actual punisher. The moon becomes a place to which even mortals have it in their power, by cursing, to consign their fellows. Thus, the person in the moon is a daughter cursed thither by her mother for idleness in spinning, or for having gone to a dance in her mother's absence, or a seventh son cursed thither by his father, who, as a peasant, had children enough.‡ In Würtemberg it is still a common formula for the asseveration of innocence to say, "If I did it, may I go to the moon!" (*Haun i's daun, so komm i in maun*).§ The moon as the place of punishment comes out still more clearly in Dante's identification of the figure in it with Cain; or in the story, as told, for instance, in Aargau, of the man who having cut down a fir-tree was allowed to choose his punishment between the two alternatives of the sun's heat or the moon's cold.

This last story is an important link in the chain of an hypothesis which the foregoing facts seem naturally to suggest, because in Russia and Germany the moon is on account of its cold identified with the place of future punishment, at least for sabbath-breakers.|| The northern nations of Europe were taught by grim experience to dread extremities of cold more than extremities of heat; and in Norse mythology we accordingly find not only that Nifheim, where Hel, the goddess of death, received the departed, was thought of as a world of cold that lay to the north, but that it was opposed to a world of heat that lay towards the south. Were, then, these two worlds respectively suggested by the moon and the sun? And if Nifheim, as a place of cold punishment, was suggested

* Grimm, *D. Myth.* 683.

† *Ib.* 763.

‡ Schönwerth, ii. 68.

§ Rochholz, *Naturmythen*, 244.

|| Rochholz, 246: "Wegen dieser rüssischen Kälte gilt der Mond auch in Deutschland als Strafanstalt für Sonntagsentheiliger."

by the moon, may not the sun in other climates have given birth to the idea of a world where excess of heat formed the basis of penal suffering for the wicked ?

An obvious objection to such an hypothesis is that Niflheim was a *subterranean* world, and that so all places of purgatory have been imagined to be, whereas the sun and moon are ærial in appearance. But how did any idea of a subterranean world come into existence at all ? It is not an idea of obvious occurrence to mankind. Among the more primitive conceptions of savage races concerning a future state, the dead, if located anywhere, are rather located beyond certain visible mountains, seas, or rivers, than either in or under the earth. The sun and moon, after the stage of a purely personal explanation of them has once been passed, inasmuch as they are seen to rise from below or out of, and to sink beneath or into, the earth, are really, in spite of first thoughts to the contrary, more closely associated with the conception of a subterranean world than any other natural phenomena whatever.

Two very extravagant stories may be referred to as relating to the subterranean existence of the sun and moon during their absence from the sky.

Four brothers once caught the moon, and hung it upon some oak-trees ; and a quarter of the moon was buried with each brother as he died. When, therefore, in course of time the four quarters met in the under world, they became reunited, and shining as a complete moon they raised the dead from their sleep ; so that it became necessary to send St. Peter to replace the lost luminary in heaven. Here at least is a distinct trace of the moon's presence below the earth.*

The story of the sun from Servia is even more ridiculous. When the devils fell, their king carried off the sun from heaven affixed to a lance. The archangel, St. Michael, was sent to try to recover it. He therefore made friends with the arch-fiend, and on coming to a lake proposed a bathe. The sun on its spear having been fixed in the soil, the archangel suggested a trial in diving. But as soon as the devil had dived, St. Michael made the sign of the cross, and ran off with the sun as fast as he could ; hotly pursued, however, in a moment by his enemy, who just contrived to scratch the foot of the retreating archangel as he returned to the place whence he came. It was for a consolation to the latter that all men afterwards who should come into the world were destined to have indented soles.† The sun in this story never actually arrived underground, but it is evident for what destination it was bound.

The argument may therefore be summed up as follows. The earliest thought about the heavenly bodies explained them as actual human beings, more or less closely connected with mankind, and possessing power over them. From persons having such power, they became places to which men for certain things might be consigned, whilst the extreme

* Rochholz, 230.

† Karajic, *Volksmärchen der Serben*, 137.

heat associated with the one, and the extreme cold associated with the other, suggested more and more that such consignment was penal in its nature and purpose. The visible movements of either gave birth to the idea of a subterranean world, to which in time became almost exclusively attached the ideas of future suffering originally associated with the one and the other. To that subterranean world also became attached another attribute of such suffering besides intensity of heat or cold, namely, its eternity of duration, suggested by the unceasing regularity of the movements of the sun and moon, and still preserved in existent European myths which make a prominent feature of the never-ending punishment of the sinner whose fate in the moon is visible as an eternal warning to mankind.

It is for speculation to guess, rather than for science to determine, how far popular conceptions of future punishment have sprung from such considerations of the ice-cold of the moon, or the fiery heat of the sun. But the theory is evidently capable of an accession of probability, which it is possible to indicate. Among the many forms of belief in a future existence found among the ruder populations of the world, there is an almost uniform absence of any idea of that existence being connected with moral qualities exhibited on earth. There is also in general associated with this absence of definite ideas of future punishment, an absence of definite conceptions of any fixed locality haunted by the dead. If, therefore, it could be shown by inquiry that people so characterised with regard to their belief in a future existence (that is, who do not connect it with the moral qualities displayed in life, nor with a definite locality), still thought of the sun and moon as persons rather than as places, the argument would clearly gain in force that such a transition of thought is necessary before a future life and future punishment can be thought of in connection together; and that when once the sun and moon have become definite localities, a great step has been taken in aid of ideas which seek to connect with corresponding future deserts conduct that has been esteemed or condemned upon earth. For according as one luminary suggested an intensification of heat or cold endured in this world, and therefore greater suffering from either cause than was known on earth, would the other come to be thought of as reversing those conditions, and therefore as a place of sensational delight, reserved only for those who, by their bravery or their other virtues, might be so fortunate as to deserve it.

The flexibility of imagination apparent in the solar and lunar myths above referred to, is not inconsistent with a fundamental uniformity of thought which affords a startling proof of the fixed laws that in reality limit and govern our intellectual faculties. One illustration of this is deserving of mention. The fact that children in Swabia are not allowed to make shadows on the wall in imitation of the hare in the moon, proves that the moon's spots represent a hare in addition to all the other things they are thought to represent. The resemblance is certainly not

obvious, and is perhaps connected with some lost tradition. But the strange thing is to find that in China, India, and Ceylon, there is also a hare in the moon, and in connection with a definite tradition. In Indian popular mythology the god of the moon carries a hare; in China the ruler of heaven changed himself into a hare to assuage the pangs of a hungry traveller, in memory of which virtuous act the hare's figure was placed in the moon; whilst in Ceylon, the story goes that Buddha when hungry once met a hare in a wood, who leapt into a fire which he bade Buddha light, in order to be cooked for his benefit; but that Buddha immediately snatched the animal from the flames, and translated him to the moon.*

In explanation, therefore, of the irrational mythology of the past, the tales still told or remembered in the present may be brought to bear. The popular mythology of our own day is less a corruption of conceptions that once were plausible, than a survival of conceptions that have always been as irrational as they have also been plausible. The incidents of modern as of primitive mythology are no more absurd to their preservers or creators than are the changing phases of a dream unreal or impossible to the sleeping brain; and there is obviously no limit to the fictions that may arise out of such real beliefs often existing simultaneously, as that the moon is a man, a cow, or a wolf, or has a man, a hare, or dog, upon its surface.

The reaction of language on thought would thus seem only to add to the resources and possibilities of mythological absurdity, the influence of thought on language being its original source and permanent support. The influence of language could never make mythology more irrational than it was at its birth, and would be but an incidental cause of absurdity like many another. Such another cause of mythological confusion lies in the love, of all apparently but the lowest savages, for enigmas and riddles. The modern folk-lore of Europe supplies samples of such riddles, which are akin in their construction to those beloved of Zulus or Bushmen. Take, for instance, the following Tirolese riddle:—

*Piatto sopra piatto,
Uomo ben armato,
Donna ben vestita,
Cavalleria ben furnita.†*

Who, unless he were told, would ever see, in this dish above a dish the sky above the earth, in the well-armed man the sun, in the well-dressed woman the moon, and in the well-furnished cavalry the stars? Or who, again, would detect in such an enigma as

*Due viandanti, . . . Two travellers,
Due bene stanti, . . . Two who firmly stand,
E un cardinal, . . . And a cardinal,*

* Grimm, *Deutsche Mythologie*, 679.

† Schneller, *Märchen aus Wä'schtirol*, 256.

an allusion to the sun and moon, the heaven and earth, and the sea? Or who in the case of the Lithuanian riddle, "The father with his fur full of ears of corn," would readily supply the solution, that it meant the sky and the stars?

It is evident how easily stories might spring out of these or similar enigmatical allusions to natural phenomena, even if we only take the riddle as implying a fanciful comparison, as seems most often to be the case, and not as preserving in altered form older beliefs and explanations of nature. A riddle would naturally often be the form into which ruder beliefs would be translated after the loss of their original vitality, and the Tirolese riddle, in which the sun and moon figure still as man and woman, retains the impression of a thought that the language of most countries proves to have been once an actual belief upon the earth.

J. A. F.

Voltaire in England.

PART I.

THE residence of Voltaire in England is an unwritten chapter in the literary history of the eighteenth century. And yet assuredly few episodes in that history are so well worth attentive consideration. In his own opinion it was the turning-point of his life. In the opinion of Condorcet it was fraught with consequences of momentous importance to Europe and to humanity. What is certain is that it left its traces on almost everything which he subsequently produced, either as the professed disciple and interpreter of English teachers, or as an independent inquirer. Its influence extended even to his poetry and to his criticism, to his work as an historian and to his work as an essayist. Nor is this all. The circumstances under which he sought our protection; his strange experiences among us; his relations with Pope, Swift, and Bolingbroke, with the Court, with our aristocracy, with the people; the zeal and energy with which he studied our manners, our government, our science, our history, our literature; his courageous attempts to distinguish himself as a writer in English—all combine to form one of the most interesting passages in his singularly interesting career.

But unfortunately no portion of Voltaire's biography is involved in greater obscurity. "On ignore," writes Charles Rémusat, "à peu près quelle fut sa vie en Angleterre. Ces deux années sont une lacune dans son histoire. C'est un point de sa biographie qui mériterait des recherches." Carlyle, who attempted in the third volume of his *Frederick the Great* to throw some light on it, abandoned the task in impatient despair. Mere inanity and darkness visible—such are his expressions—reign in all Voltaire's biographies over this period of his life. Seek not to know it; no man has inquired into it, probably no competent man ever will. It happened, however, that at the very time Carlyle was thus expressing himself, a very competent man was engaged on the task. The researches of Desnoiresterres succeeded in dispersing a portion at least of the obscurity which hung over Voltaire's movements during these mysterious years. He took immense pains to supply the deficiencies of preceding biographers. Judging rightly that all that could now be recovered could be recovered only in scattered fragments, he diligently collected such information as lay dispersed in Voltaire's own correspondence and writings, and in the correspondence and writings of those with whom his illustrious countryman had when in England been brought into contact. Much has, it is true, escaped him; much which he has collected he has not, perhaps, turned to the best account; but it is due to him—the fullest and

the most satisfactory of Voltaire's biographers—to say that his chapter “Voltaire et la Société Anglaise” must form the basis of all future inquiries into this most interesting subject. To higher praise he is not, we think, entitled. Some of Desnoiresterres' deficiencies are supplied by Mr. Parton, whose *Life of Voltaire* appeared in two goodly octavos a few months ago. Mr. Parton has made one or two unimportant additions to what was already known, but he has, we are sorry to find, done little more. We gratefully acknowledge our obligations both to Desnoiresterres and to Mr. Parton. But these obligations are slight.

The first point to be settled is the exact date of his arrival in England, and that date can, we think, be determined with some certainty. On May 2 (n.s.), 1726, an order arrived for his release from the Bastille, on the understanding that he would quit France and betake himself, as he had offered to do, to England. On May 6 he was, as his letter to Madame de Ferriole proves, at Calais; and at Calais he remained for some days the guest of his friend Dunoquet. How long he remained at Calais it is not possible to discover, but he tells us himself that he disembarked at Greenwich, and it is clear from the passage which follows that he landed on the day of Greenwich Fair. That fair was invariably held on Whit-Monday, and Whit-Monday fell in 1726 on May 30 (o.s.) Now a reference to the *Daily Courant* for May 30 shows that a mail arrived from France on Sunday the 29th, which would be, of course, according to the new style, May 18. Supposing, therefore, that his visit at Calais was protracted to twelve days after his letter to Madame de Ferriole—and there is no reason for supposing that it was not—the time would exactly tally. That he should have remained on board till Monday morning need excite no surprise. But there is other evidence in favour of this date. In the remarkable passage in which he describes what he saw on landing, he tells us that the vessels in the river had spread their sails (*déployé leurs voiles*), to do honour to the King and Queen, and he particularly notices the splendid liveries worn by the King's menials. We turn to the *London Gazette* for Monday, May 30, and we find that on that day, the King's birthday, the rejoicings for which had been deferred from the preceding Saturday, was “celebrated with the usual demonstrations of public joy;” and in the *British Gazetteer* for Saturday, May 21, we read that “great preparations are making for celebrating the King's birthday,” and that “the King's menial servants are to be new clothed on that occasion.” We believe, then, that Voltaire first set foot in England on Whit-Monday, May 30 (18), 1726.

On the voyage he had been the prey of melancholy thoughts. He drew, in the bitterness of his soul, a parallel between his own position and the position in which his favourite hero once stood. And his feelings found expression in verse—

Je ne dois pas être plus fortuné
Que le héros célébré sur ma vielle.
Il fut proscrit, persécuté, damné

Par les dévots et leur douce séquelle.
 En Angleterre il trouva du secours,
 J'en vais chercher.*

But on landing he soon recovered his cheerfulness, and throwing himself in a transport of joy on the earth, he reverently saluted it.† Many of his countrymen have described their first impressions of the land of Shakespeare and Newton, but to none of them has it ever presented itself as it presented itself to the fascinated eye of Voltaire. Everything combined to fill the young exile with delight and admiration. Though his health was delicate, he was in exuberant spirits. It was a cloudless day in the loveliest month of the English year. A soft wind from the west—we are borrowing his own glowing description—tempered the rays of the hot spring sun. The Thames, rolling full and rapid, was in all its glory; and in all their glory, too, were the stately trees which have now disappeared, but which then fringed the river banks on both sides for many miles. Nor was it nature only that was keeping carnival. It was the anniversary of the Great Fair, and it was the anniversary of the King's birthday. The river between Greenwich and London was one unbroken pageant. Farther than the eye could see, stretched with every sail, crowded two lines of merchant ships drawn up to salute the royal barge, which, preceded by boats with bands of music, and followed by wherries rowed by men in gorgeous liveries, floated slowly past. Loyal acclamations rent the air, and Voltaire observed with interest that a nation of freemen was a nation of dutiful subjects. From the river he turned to the park, and, curious to see English society in all its phases, he spent the afternoon in observing what was going on. He wandered up and down the park, questioning such holiday-makers as could understand him about the races, and the arrangements for the races. He admired the skill with which the young women managed their horses, and was greatly struck with the freshness and beauty of their complexions, the neatness of their dress, and the graceful vivacity of their movements. In the course of his rambles he accidentally met some English merchants to whom he had letters of introduction. By them he was treated with great courtesy and kindness. They lent him a horse, they provided him with refreshments, and they placed him where both the park and the river could be seen to most advantage. While he was enjoying the fine view from the hill, he perceived near him a Danish courier who had like himself just arrived in England. The man's face, says Voltaire, was radiant with joy; he believed himself to be in a paradise where the women were always beautiful and animated, where the sky was always clear, and where no one thought of anything but pleasure. "And I," he adds, "was even more enchanted than the Dane."

* Quoted in the *Historical Memoirs* of the author of the *Henriade* (1778), where the writer speaks of having seen these verses in a letter in Voltaire's own handwriting addressed to M. Dumas d'Aiguebère.

† Duvernet, *Vie de Voltaire*, p. 64.

The same evening he was in London, in all probability the guest of Bolingbroke. His acquaintance with that distinguished man had begun at La Source in the winter of 1721. Their acquaintance had soon ripened into intimacy, and though since then their personal intercourse had been interrupted, they had interchanged letters. At that time Bolingbroke was an exile; he had recently obtained a pardon, and was now settled in England, where he divided his time between his town house in Pall Mall and his country house at Dawley. The friendship of Bolingbroke would have been a sufficient passport to the most brilliant literary circles in London, but as the connection of Bolingbroke lay principally among the Tories, the young adventurer had taken the precaution to secure a protector among the Whigs. The name of Bubb Dodington is now a synonym for all that is vilest and most contemptible in the trade of politics, but at the time of which we are writing his few virtues were more prominent than his many vices. His literary accomplishments, his immense wealth, and his generous though not very discriminating patronage of men of letters, had deservedly given him a high place among the Mæcenases of his age. At his palace in Dorsetshire he loved to assemble the wits and poets of the Opposition, the most distinguished of whom were Thomson and Young—the one still busy with his Seasons, the other slowly elaborating his brilliant Satirics. For his introduction to Dodington he was indebted to the English Ambassador at Paris, Horace Walpole the elder, who had, at the instigation of the Count de Morville, written a letter recommending him to the patronage of Dodington. How fully he availed himself of these and other influential friends is proved by the fact that when he quitted England in 1729 there was scarcely a single person of distinction, either in letters or politics, with whom he was not personally acquainted. But his most intimate associate was an opulent English merchant who resided at Wandsworth, and whose name was Everard Falkener. He had become acquainted with him in Paris, and had promised, should opportunity offer, to visit him in England.* Falkener's house he seems to have regarded as his home, and of Falkener himself he always speaks in terms of affection and gratitude. He dedicated "*Zaire*" to him; he regularly corresponded with him; and to the end of his life he loved to recall the happy days spent under his good friend's hospitable roof at Wandsworth. Many years afterwards, when he wished to express his sense of the kindness he had received from King Stanislaus, he described him "as a kind of Falkener." Of Falkener few particulars have survived. We know from Voltaire that he was subsequently appointed Ambassador to Constantinople, that he held some appointment in Flanders, and that he was knighted. We gather from other sources that he became secretary to the Duke of Cumberland, and that he was one of the witnesses called on the trial of Simon Lord Lovat in 1746. To this it may be added

* Goldsmith's *Life of Voltaire*, Miscell. Works, iv. p. 20.

that he became towards the end of George the Second's reign one of the Postmasters-General; that in 1747* he married a daughter of General Churchill; and that he died at Bath, November 16, 1758.† That Voltaire should have delighted in his society is not surprising, for though we know little of Falkener's character, we know enough to understand its charm. "I am here"—so runs a passage in one of his letters, quoted by Voltaire in his remarks upon Pascal—"just as you left me, neither merrier nor sadder, nor richer nor poorer; enjoying perfect health, having everything that renders life agreeable, without love, without avarice, without ambition, and without envy; and as long as all that lasts I shall call myself a very happy man."‡

To what extent Voltaire was acquainted with the English language on his arrival at Greenwich it is impossible to say. We can find no traces of his having been engaged in studying it before his retirement subsequent to the caning he received from the Chevalier de Rohan at the beginning of February 1726. If this was the case, what he knew of our language was what he had been able to pick up in about three months. His progress must have been unusually rapid, for he had not only made himself understood at Greenwich Fair, but on the following day he had mingled familiarly in conversation at the coffee-houses. It is of course possible that the conversation had on these occasions been carried on in his native language. Then, as now, large numbers of French refugees had found a home in London. They had their own places of worship; they had their own coffee-houses, the principal being the "Rainbow" in Marylebone. Then, as now, almost all educated Englishmen were conversant with the language of Racine and Molière. Regularly as each season came round a Parisian company appeared. At Court it was the usual mode of communication. By 1728 its attainment was held to be so essential a part of education that in the October of that year a journal was started, the proposed object of which was to facilitate the study of it.§ Indeed, wherever he went he would encounter his countrymen, or Londoners who could converse with him in the language of his countrymen. In Bolingbroke's house he would probably hear little else, for Lady Bolingbroke scarcely ever ventured to express herself in English; and of Falkener's proficiency in French we have abundant proof. But among the cultivated Englishmen of that day there was one remarkable exception, and that was unfortunately in the case of a man with whom Voltaire was most anxious to exchange ideas. "Pope," wrote Voltaire many years afterwards, could hardly read French, and spoke not one "syllable of our language."|| Voltaire's desire to meet Pope had no doubt been sharpened by the flattering remarks which Pope had two

* *Gentleman's Magazine* for Feb. 1747.

† *Id.* for Nov. 1758.

‡ *Œuvres Complètes*, Beuchot, vol. xxxviii. p. 46.

§ See the *Flying Post* or *Weekly Medley*, the first number of which appeared on October 8, 1728.

|| See Spence's *Anecdotes* (Singer, 8vo), p. 204, *note*.

years before made about the *Henriade*, or, as it was then entitled, *La Ligue*. A copy of the poem had been forwarded to him from France by Bolingbroke, and to oblige Bolingbroke he had managed to spell it out. The perusal had given him, he said, a very favourable idea of the author, whom he pronounced to be "a bigot but no heretic; one who knows authority and national sanctions without prejudice to truth and charity; in a word, one worthy of that share of friendship and intimacy with which you honour him." * These complimentary remarks Bolingbroke had, it seems, conveyed to Voltaire, and a correspondence appeared to have ensued between the two poets, though no traces of that correspondence are now to be found. † Of his first interview with Pope three accounts are now extant. The first is that given by Owen Ruffhead, the substance of which is repeated by Johnson in his life of Pope; the second is that given by Goldsmith, and the third is that given by Duvernet. It will be well, perhaps, to let each authority tell his own story.

"Mr. Pope," writes Owen Ruffhead, "told one of his most intimate friends that the poet Voltaire had got some recommendation to him when he came to England, and that the first time he saw him was at Twickenham, where he kept him to dinner. Mrs. Pope, a most excellent woman, was then alive, and observing that this stranger, who appeared to be entirely emaciated, had no stomach, she expressed her concern for his want of appetite, on which Voltaire gave her so indelicate and brutal an account of the occasion of his disorder, contracted in Italy, that the poor lady was obliged immediately to rise from table. When Mr. Pope related that, his friend asked him how he could forbear ordering his servant John to thrust Voltaire head and shoulders out of his house? He replied that there was more of ignorance in this conduct than a purposed affront; that Voltaire came into England, as other foreigners do, on a prepossession that not only all religion, but all common decency of morals, was lost among us."—*Life of Pope*, 4to, p. 156.

Next comes Goldsmith:—

M. Voltaire has often told his friends that he never observed in himself such a succession of opposite passions as he experienced upon his first interview with Mr. Pope. When he first entered the room and perceived our poor, melancholy poet, naturally deformed and wasted as he was with sickness and study, he could not help regarding him with the utmost compassion; but when Pope began to speak and to reason upon moral obligations, and dress the most delicate sentiments in the most charming diction, Voltaire's pity began to be changed into admiration, and at last even into envy. It is not uncommon with him to assert that no man ever pleased him so much in serious conversation, nor any whose sentiments mended so much upon recollection.—*Life of Voltaire*, Miscellaneous Works, iv. p. 24.

It is difficult to reconcile these accounts with the narrative of Duvernet, who, as he almost certainly had his information from Thiériot, is an authority of great weight:—

Dans leur première entrevue ils furent fort embarrassés. Pope s'exprimait très péniblement en français, et Voltaire n'étant point accoutumé aux sifflements de la langue anglaise ne pouvait se faire entendre. Il se retira dans un village et ne rentra dans Londres que lorsqu'il eut acquis une grande facilité à s'exprimer en anglais.

* Letter to Bolingbroke, dated April 9, 1724.

† See Pope's letter to Carye, dated December 25, 1725.

This seems to us by far the most probable account. It is certain that Voltaire devoted himself with great assiduity to the systematic study of English shortly after his arrival among us. He provided himself with a regular teacher, who probably assisted him not only in the composition of his letters, which he now regularly wrote in English, but in the composition of his two famous essays.* He obtained an introduction to Colley Cibber, and regularly attended the theatres, following the play in a printed copy.† His studies were, however, interrupted by his suddenly leaving England for France—an expedition attended with considerable peril, and conducted with the utmost secrecy. The particulars of this journey are involved in great obscurity. That he undertook it with the object of inducing the Chevalier de Rohan to give him an opportunity of avenging his wounded honour—that for some time, at least, he remained concealed in Paris, not venturing to have an interview with any friend or with any relative—is clear from his letter to Thiériot dated August 12, 1726. That he was at Wandsworth again, almost immediately afterwards, is proved by a letter to Mademoiselle Bessières, dated October 15, in which he speaks of himself as having been there for two months.

He arrived in England in a state of abject depression, and this depression was aggravated by ill-health and the cross accidents of fortune. He had brought with him a bill of exchange of the value of 20,000 francs, and this bill—not being in immediate need of money—he had neglected to present. On presenting it to the man on whom it had been drawn—one D'Acosta, a Jew—D'Acosta informed him that three days before he had become bankrupt; and the money was lost. His misfortune, however, happening to reach the ears of the King, the King good-naturedly sent him a sum which has been variously estimated, but which probably amounted to a hundred guineas, and so relieved him from pressing embarrassment. But what affected him most was the news of the death of his sister. This threw him into an agony of grief. There is nothing in the whole range of Voltaire's voluminous correspondence so touching as the letter in which his feelings on this sad occasion found vent. It was addressed to Mademoiselle Bessières, the lady who had sent the intelligence. It is dated "Wandsworth, October 15, 1726." He describes himself as acquainted only with the sorrows of life; he is dead, he says, to everything but the affection he owes to his correspondent. He alludes bitterly to the "retraite ignorée" from which he writes; and he says it would have been far better, both for his relatives and himself, had death removed him instead of his sister. "Les amertumes et les souffrances"—so run his gloomy reflections—"qui en ont marqué presque tous les jours ont été souvent mon ouvrage. Je sens le peu que je vaux; mes faiblesses me font pitié et mes fautes me font

* *La Voltairomanie*, pp. 46, 47.

† Chetwood's *History of the Stage*, p. 46.

horreur." On the following day he wrote in a similar strain to Madame de Bernières. He was in deep distress, too, at the cruelty and injustice with which he had been treated by his brother; and to this distress he subsequently gave passionate utterance in a letter to Thiériot.* But neither depression nor sorrow ever held long dominion over that buoyant and volatile spirit. On the very day on which he was thus mournfully expressing himself to Madame de Bernières, he was, in another letter, dilating with enthusiasm on the beauties of Pope's poetry. This we learn from a very interesting fragment preserved by Warburton in his notes to the *Epistle to Arbuthnot*. As the fragment appears to have escaped the notice of all Voltaire's editors and biographers, and as it proves the very high opinion he entertained of Pope's genius, we will quote a portion of it:—

I look upon his poem called the *Essay on Criticism* as superior to the *Art of Poetry* of Horace, and his *Rape of the Lock* is, in my opinion, above the *Lutrin* of Despreaux. I never saw so amiable an imagination, so gentle graces, so great variety, so much wit, and so refined knowledge of the world, as in this little performance.

It would be interesting to know if this manuscript letter, which Warburton describes as being before him as he wrote, is now in existence. It was dated October 15, 1726.

Of his movements during the autumn of 1726 we know nothing. The probability is that he was engaged in close study, and saw little society. He instructs his correspondents in France to direct their letters to the care of Lord Bolingbroke; but he was evidently not in personal communication with Bolingbroke or with any member of the Twickenham circle. This is proved by the fact that he knew nothing of the serious accident by which Pope nearly lost his life until two months after it had happened, as his letter to Pope, dated November 16, shows. Another letter,† too—a letter undated, but evidently belonging to this period, and written in English—addressed to John Brinsden, Bolingbroke's secretary, points to the same conclusion. Very little, however, of the following year was spent in retirement, for we find traces of him in many places. His attenuated figure and eager, haggard face grew familiar to the frequenters of fashionable society. He passed three months at the seat of Lord Peterborough, where he became intimate with Swift,‡ who was a fellow-visitor. At Bubb Dodington's mansion, at Eastbury, he met Young, who had not as yet taken orders, but was seeking fortune as a hanger-on at great houses. It was a curious chance which brought together the future author of the *Night Thoughts* and the future author of *La Pucelle*; it was a still more curious circumstance

* See letter dated "Wandsworth, June 14, 1727," *Œuvres Complètes* (ed. 1880), vol. xxxiii. p. 172.

† Preserved in Colet's *Relics of Literature*, p. 70.

‡ See a very interesting extract from a MS. journal kept by a Major Broome, who visited Voltaire in 1765, and who heard this and other particulars from Voltaire himself. It is printed in *Notes and Queries* (first series), vol. x. p. 403.

that they should have formed a friendship which remained unbroken when the one had become the most rigid of Christian divines and the other the most daring of anti-Christian incendiaries.* At Eastbury occurred a well-known incident. A discussion had arisen as to the merits of *Paradise Lost*. Young spoke in praise of his favourite poet; Voltaire, who had as little sympathy with Milton as he had with Æschylus and Dante, objected to the episode of Sin and Death, contending that as they were abstractions it was absurd to assign them offices proper only to concrete beings. These objections he enforced with his usual eloquence and sarcastic wit. The parallel between the hungry monster of Milton, "grinning horrible its ghastly smile," and the meagre form of the speaker—his thin face lighted up, as it always was in conversation, with that peculiar sardonic smile familiar to us from his portraits—was irresistible. And Young closed the argument with an epigram (we quote Herbert Croft's version):—

You are so witty, profligate, and thin,
At once we think thee Milton, Death, and Sin.

It appears, however, from Young's poem, where he plainly alludes to this conversation, that he succeeded in impressing on his friendly opponent "that Milton's blindness lay not in his song."

A letter written about this time to a friend in France, dated by the editors—but dated, we suspect, wrongly—1726, is a sufficient proof that the young exile was no longer either discontented or unhappy. "You who are a perfect Briton," thus the letter runs, "should cross the Channel and come to us. I assure you that a man of your temper would not dislike a country where one obeys to (*sic*) the laws only, and to one's whims. Reason is free here, and walks her own way. Hypochondriacs are especially welcome. No manner of living appears strange. We have men who walk six miles a day for their health, feed upon roots, never taste flesh, wear a coat in winter thinner than your ladies do in the hottest days." †

In March he was present at the funeral of Sir Isaac Newton. It was a spectacle which made a profound impression on him, and he ever afterwards delighted to recall how he had once been the denizen of a country in which the first officers of the State contended for the honour of supporting the pall of a man whose sole distinction had lain in intellectual eminence. How differently, he thought, would the author of the *Principia* have fared in Paris. He subsequently made the acquaintance of the philosopher's niece, Mrs. Cœnduit, and of the physician and surgeon who attended him in his last moments; from them he learned many interesting particulars. It is perhaps worth mentioning that we owe to Voltaire the famous story of the falling apple, and the preservation of the reply which Newton is said to have

* Young dedicated to Voltaire in the most flattering terms his *Sea Piece*. See his poems.

† *Pièces Inédites de Voltaire*. Paris, 1820.

given to the person who asked him how he had discovered the laws of the universe.*

In the course of this year he met Gay, who showed him the *Beggar's Opera* before it appeared on the stage; † and it was probably in the course of this year that he paid his memorable visit to Congreve. His admiration of the greatest of our comic poets is sufficiently indicated in the *Lettres Philosophiques*, and that admiration he lost no time in personally expressing. But Congreve, whose temper was probably not improved by gout and blindness, and who was irritated perhaps by the ebullience of his young admirer, affected to regard literary distinction as a trifle. "I beg," he said, "that you will look upon me, not as an author, but as a gentleman." "If," replied Voltaire, disgusted with his foppery, "you had had the misfortune to be simply a gentleman, I should not have troubled myself to wait upon you." To Congreve he owed, we suspect, his introduction to the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough, who not only communicated to him some interesting particulars which he afterwards wove into his *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, but is said to have solicited his assistance in drawing up her memoirs. This task he at first consented to undertake. The Duchess laid the papers before him, and issued her instructions. Finding, however, that he was to write, not as unbiassed historical justice required, but as her Grace's capricious prejudices dictated, he ventured to expostulate. Upon that her manner suddenly changed. Flying into a passion, she snatched the paper from him, muttering, "I thought the man had sense; but I find him, at bottom, either a fool or a philosopher." The story is told by Goldsmith; ‡ it would be interesting to know on what authority.

Another story, resting, it is true, on no very satisfactory testimony, but in itself so intrinsically probable that we are inclined to believe it genuine, is related by Desnoiresterres. Voltaire, hearing that the Duchess was engaged in preparing her memoirs for publication, ventured to ask if he might be permitted to glance at the manuscript. "You must wait a little," she said, "for I am revising it;" coolly observing that the conduct of the Government had so disgusted her that she had determined to recast the character of Queen Anne, "as I have," she added, "since these creatures have been our rulers, come to love her again." Pope's *Atossa* was assuredly no caricature, and a better commentary on it it would be impossible to find.

Like most of his countrymen Voltaire appears to have been greatly struck with the beauty of the English women, and about this time he became acquainted with one whose charms have been more frequently celebrated than those of any other woman of that age. Voltaire was one of the thousand adorers of Molly Lepel, then the wife of Lord Hervey. To her he addressed a copy of verses which are interesting as being the

* *Lettres Philosophiques*, passim.

† MS. letter written by a Major Broome, who visited Voltaire in 1765: printed in *Notes and Queries* (first series), vol. x. p. 403.

‡ *Life of Voltaire*, Miscellaneous Works, iv. p. 25.

only verses now extant composed by him in English. Their intrinsic merit is not, it must be admitted, of a high order, but as a literary curiosity they will bear repetition :—

Hervey, would you know the passion
 You have kindled in my breast ?
 Trifling is the inclination
 That by words can be express'd.
 In my silence see the lover—
 True love is best by silence known ;
 In my eyes you'll best discover
 All the power of your own.

A curious fortune attended these verses. They were subsequently transcribed and addressed to a lady named Laura Harley—the wife of a London merchant—by one of her gallants, and they formed part of the evidence on which her husband grounded his claim for a divorce.* This has misled Mr. Parton, who supposes that Voltaire wrote them, not in honour of Lady Hervey, but in honour of poor Mr. Harley's erring wife. That they awoke no jealousy in Lord Hervey is proved by Voltaire's letter to Thiériot, dated April 1732, and by a letter he addressed to Hervey himself in 1740. But the beautiful wife of Lord Hervey was not the only lady distinguished by the admiration of Voltaire. He has spoken in rapturous terms of the graces and accomplishments of Lady Bolingbroke, for whom he finds a place in his *Siècle de Louis XIV.* ; and an unpublished letter in the British Museum shows that he had paid assiduous court to Lady Sundon, who had evidently not been insensible to his flattery.†

And now we come to a very curious story, a story which is related in detail by Ruffhead, and has been repeated by Johnson. It had long been suspected by Pope and Bolingbroke that Voltaire was playing a double part ; in other words, that he had formed a secret alliance with the Court party, and was acting as their spy. Their suspicion was soon confirmed. In February 1727 appeared the third of a series of letters in which the character and policy of Walpole were very severely handled. The letter was written with unusual energy and skill ; it attracted much attention, and Walpole's friends were anxious to discover the author. While it was still the theme of conversation Voltaire came to Twickenham, and asked Pope if he could tell him who wrote it. Pope, seeing his object, and wishing to prove him, informed him in the strictest confidence that he was himself the author of it, "and," he added, "I trust to your honour as a gentleman, Mr. Voltaire, that you will communicate this secret to no living soul." The letter had really been written by Bolingbroke, and bore in truth no traces of Pope's style ; but the next day every one at Court was speaking of it as Pope's composition, and Voltaire's treachery was manifest. To this Bolingbroke apparently alludes in a letter to Swift (May 18, 1727) : "I would have you insinuate that

* This circumstance is mentioned by Châteaufort in his *Les Divorces Anglais*, and is discussed by Desnoiresterres.

† Additional MSS.

the only reason Walpole can have to ascribe them (*i.e.* the occasional letters just alluded to) to a particular person is the authority of one of his spies, who wriggles himself into the company of those who neither love, esteem, nor fear the Minister, that he may report, not what he hears, since no man speaks with any freedom before him, but what he guesses." Conduct so scandalous as this ought not to be lightly imputed to any man, and it would be satisfactory to know that Voltaire had either been traduced or misrepresented. It is not likely, however, that the story was invented by Warburton, from whom Ruffhead almost certainly had it, and there is, moreover, strong presumptive evidence in its favour. Voltaire had undoubtedly been meddling with the matter, for in a letter to Thiériot dated May 27, 1727, he says:—"Do not talk of the Occasional Writer. Do not say that it is not of my Lord Bolingbroke. Do not say that it is a wretched performance. You cannot be judge." It is certain that he twice received money from the Court; it is certain that he visited Walpole, and that he sought every opportunity of ingratiating himself with the King and with the King's friends. It is clear that neither Pope nor any member of Pope's circle had much confidence in him. Bolingbroke has indeed expressly declared that he believed him capable of double-dealing and insincerity,* and what Bolingbroke observed in him was observed also by Young.† Nor was such conduct at all out of keeping with the general tenor of Voltaire's behaviour during his residence among us. Throughout his aims were purely selfish, and to attain those ends he resorted to means which no man of an honest and independent spirit would have stooped to use. It would perhaps be unduly harsh to describe him as a parasite and a sycophant; but it is nevertheless true that he too often figures in a character closely bordering on both. His correspondence—and his conversation no doubt resembled his correspondence—is almost sickening. His compliments are so fulsome, his flattery so exaggerated, that they might excusably be mistaken for elaborate irony. He seems to be always on his knees. There was scarcely a distinguished man then living in England who had not been the object of this nauseous homage. He pours it indiscriminately on Pope, Swift, Gay, Clarke, on half the Cabinet and on half the peerage. In a man of this character falsehood and hypocrisy are the very essence of his composition. There is nothing, however base, to which he will not stoop; there is no law in the code of social honour which he is not capable of violating. The fact that he continued to remain on friendly terms with Pope and Bolingbroke can scarcely be alleged as a proof of his innocence, for neither Pope nor Bolingbroke would, for such an offence, be likely to quarrel with a man in a position so peculiar as that of Voltaire. His flattery was pleasant, and his flattery, as they well knew, might some day be worth having. No injuries are so readily overlooked as those which affect neither men's purses nor men's vanity.

Meanwhile he was diligently collecting materials which were after-

* See his letter to Madame de Ferriole, dated December 1725, *Lettres Historiques*, vol. iii. p. 274.

† Spence's *Anecdotes*, p. 285.

wards embodied in his *Lettres Philosophiques*, his *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, his *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, and his *Histoire de Charles XII.* First he investigated the history and tenets of the Quakers. He sought the acquaintance of one Andrew Pitt, who resided in the country not far from London, and he attended a Quakers' meeting, of which he gives a very amusing account, near the Monument. The substance of his conversation with Pitt, supplemented by his own independent study of Quaker literature, he has embodied in the article on Quakers in the *Philosophical Dictionary*, and in the first four *Philosophical Letters*. He investigated the various religious sects into which English Protestantism had divided itself, and to these schisms he somewhat paradoxically ascribes the harmony and contentment reigning in the religious world of England. "If," he observes, "only one religion were allowed in England, the government would very possibly become arbitrary; if there were but two, the people would cut one another's throats; but as there are such a multitude, they all live happy and in peace." He studied the economy of the Established Church, and the habits and character of the clergy. Our commerce, our finance, and our government, each engaged his attention, and on each he has commented with his usual superficial cleverness. Three things he observed with especial pleasure, because they contrasted so strongly with what he had been accustomed to witness in France. He found himself for the first time in his life in the midst of a free people, a people who lived unshackled save by laws which they had themselves enacted; a people who, enjoying the inestimable privilege of a free press, were, in the phrase of Tacitus, at liberty to think what they pleased, and to publish what they thought. He beheld a splendid and powerful aristocracy, not, as in Paris, standing contemptuously aloof from science and letters, but themselves not unfrequently eager candidates for literary and scientific distinction. The names of many of these noble authors he has recorded, and they are, he adds, more glorious for their works than for their titles. With not less pleasure he beheld the honourable rank assigned in English society to a class who were in the Faubourg St. Germain regarded with disdain. Voltaire was perhaps the first writer of eminence in Europe who had the courage to vindicate the dignity of trade. He relates with pride how, when the Earl of Oxford held the reins of Great Britain in his hands, his younger brother was a factor at Aleppo; how, when Lord Townshend was directing the councils of his Sovereign in the Painted Chamber, one of his nearest relatives was soliciting custom in a counting-house in the City. He draws a sarcastic parallel between a "seigneur, powdered in the life of the mode, who knows exactly what o'clock the King rises and goes to bed, and who gives himself airs of grandeur and state at the same time that he is acting the slave in the antechamber of a Prime Minister," and a merchant who enriches his country, despatches orders from his counting-house to Surat and Grand Cairo, and contributes to the felicity of the world.*

* See the remarkable passage at the end of the tenth letter in the *Lettres Philosophiques*. It may be worth mentioning that this work is in two forms—the English

But nothing impressed him so deeply as the homage paid, and paid by all classes, to intellectual eminence. Parts and genius were, he observed, a sure passport, not, as in France, to the barren wreath of the Academy, but to affluence and popularity. By his pen Addison had risen to one of the highest offices of the State. A few graceful poems had made the fortunes of Stepney, Prior, Gay, Parnell, Tickell, and Ambrose Philipps. By his Essays Steele had won a Commissionership of Stamps and a place in Parliament. A single comedy had made Congreve independent for life. Newton was Master of the Mint, and Locke had been a Commissioner of Appeals. He records with pride that the portrait of Walpole was to be seen only in his own closet, but that the portraits of Pope were to be seen in half the great houses in England. "Go," he says, "into Westminster Abbey, and you find that what raises the admiration of the spectator is not the mausoleums of the English Kings, but the monuments which the gratitude of the nation has erected to perpetuate the memory of those illustrious men who contributed to its glory." He thought bitterly how in his own country he had seen Crébillon on the verge of perishing by hunger, and the son of Racine on the last stage of abject destitution. When, too, on his return to France, he saw the body of poor Adrienne le Couvreur refused the last rites of religion, and buried with the burial of a dog, "because she was an actress," his thoughts wandered to the generous and large-hearted citizens who laid the coffin of Anne Oldfield beside the coffins of their kings and of their heroes.

O rivale d'Athène, O Londres ! heureuse terre,
 Ainsi que les tyrans, vous avez su chasser
 Les préjugés honteux qui vous livraient la guerre.
 C'est là qu'on sait tout dire et tout récompenser.
 Nul art n'est méprisé, tout succès a sa gloire.
 Le vainqueur de Tallard, le fils de la victoire,
 Le sublime Dryden, et le sage Addison,
 Et la charmante Oldfield, et l'immortel Newton
 Ont part au temple de mémoire,
 Et le Couvreur à Londres aurait eu des tombeaux
 Parmi les beaux-esprits, les rois et les héros.
 Quiconque a des talents à Londres est un grand homme.

La Mort de Mlle. le Couvreur.

Here we must pause. The history of Voltaire between the period at which we have now arrived and his departure from England in the spring of 1729 is too interesting and important to be treated cursorily. We hope in a future number to complete our sketch.

J. C. C.

translation, which preceded all extant French editions, appeared in 1733, and was executed under the superintendance of Thiériot, its title being *Letters concerning the English Nation*, by M. Voltaire. It appeared in French the following year as *Lettres Philosophiques*.

The Kachyens.

THE Kachyens inhabit the intermediate region between China and Burma, a great tract of hills and valleys, and are therefore chiefly of interest as controlling in no small degree the Western trade route from China, which has been several times explored, and will certainly some day be opened when satisfactory relations are established with independent Burma. Even now considerable quantities of raw cotton and English piece goods cross over the hills to Yunan, but every caravan has to pay heavy blackmail if it is to pass unmolested. The Kachyens own a nominal allegiance to the Burmese king on the one side, and to the Chinese on the other; but it is remarkably little tribute money or homage that either ever get out of them. The hillmen are much more apt to make raids on lowland villages and carry off all that is not too hot or too heavy. The Chinese trained bands and walled towns are able to hold their own, and are little molested, but there is very little neighbourliness between the mountain reivers and the Burmese villagers of the Irrawaddy Valley. The Burmans dare not venture up to the nests of the Kachyens on the hill-tops, and when the mountaineers come down, they are inhospitably kept out of all the villages in the north, even when they come in small parties, and obviously for peaceful trading purposes. Outside the high log stockades of Bhamaw and other of the larger towns there are permanent "zayats," open-sided sheds of wattled bamboo, for their accommodation, and the townspeople go out to deal with them, and buy the pigs and sulphur and such like produce brought down from the hills, and there is a very considerable amount of stand-offishness between buyer and seller, and long sojourning on the part of the Kachyens is not tolerated. But in the majority of the smaller villages such visitors are looked upon as considerably worse than tigers, and the appearance of a party of them in the neighbourhood is a signal for the turning out of all the armed population. There are high bamboo watch-towers on eligible sites outside the stockade, and guards keep watch and ward in them at all hours of the day and night. Day attacks are rare, for the Kachyens prefer skulking up in the dark quarter of the moon, but they are quite possible where the dense jungle grows to within a stone's-throw of the village gates. In the extreme north, the women usually leave the town at night to go and sleep on rafts and boats moored out in the stream, whenever there is a suspicion that the hillmen are on the move.

This does not present a very inviting picture of the race, but the

Burmans have brought the evil on themselves. Long ago the Kachyens are represented as having been a simple people, hospitable to strangers, and inclined to be peaceable with all men, if only they were let alone in their mountain eyries. But long years of extortion and brutal treatment on the part of local governors, anxious to make as much money as possible, have changed them into dangerous savages, and they are no longer content to harry only the Burmese, but wage perpetual warfare on one another, uniting from time to time to attack caravans of ill-protected traders, who have not bought themselves immunity. Each village forms a community of its own with a patriarchal chief, but the custom of elder sons setting out, each with his band of followers, to establish a colony of his own and become a "pawmaing" himself, has led to the more or less close connection of circles of communities under the nominal headship of one great chief, "Sawbwa." Still, any interference with local administration would result in immediate warfare, and each village practically goes its own way, and only combines with the others for the purpose of avenging a blood feud, or for some expedition on Burmese villages. Such raids are chronic, and no mercy is shown on either side. There are seasons when the crucifixes—huge things like a triple ladder with diagonal cross-bars—are abundant all along the Irrawaddy banks and at the foot of the mountain ranges. Whenever the Burmans come across a Kachyen at such times, they hoist him up on one of these structures, run a spear into his side, and then leave him to the crows and vultures. The Kachyens are equally prompt, but they kill their man first, cut long gashes in the calves of his legs, and rub the soles of their feet in the blood, and then trice him up to be devoured by the impartial carrion birds. Things seldom go any further than this. Every now and then, when the mountain caterans have been particularly bold, and have sacked and burnt half-a-dozen villages on the river-bank, the Burmese Government wakes up to a sense of responsibility, and despatches a regiment of the royal soldiery to exact retribution. There is a great deal of heavy "sniping" in the jungle, but no definite engagement, the Kachyens are too wily for that; as much ammunition is expended as would be fired off by a young regiment for the first time in action with the Martini-Henry, and the amount of crucifying suggests the siege of Jerusalem. The Kachyens make a night attack or two on the Burmese camp, fire their guns off defiantly, and lop off some heads and arms before they retreat. After a time the Burmese commissariat fails, and the army, having nothing to eat, incontinently disperses. Then all is quiet again for a time. The gallant "A-hmoodan" return to their homes; their colonel writes a grandiose report to Mandalay, announcing that he has gained glorious victories and exterminated the inhabitants of half-a-dozen hills. The Kachyens drink vast quantities of "sheroo," a heady kind of beer made from rice, and feast sumptuously on captured beeves for a month or two, and then the old tactics begin again. The Burmese soldiery dare not venture up into the hills, and they cannot

close with the slippery foe in any other way. The Kachyens are neither numerous nor courageous enough to face the enemy in the open ; besides that, it would be very bad policy for them to do so, and so nothing definite ever happens, and relations continue to become more and more embittered, and cannot fail to remain so as long as Burmese rule prevails.

The very name "Kachyens," given to them by the Burmese and adopted by all the surrounding nations, is an insult to their feelings, though it is possibly only an etymological corruption of their proper title, a bad shot at reproducing their names in a strange tongue. They call themselves Singpaw, or Singhpo, which means emphatically "men." It is a characteristic of semi-savage tribes to preserve the tradition, if not in their appellation, at any rate in their myths, that they were the first inhabitants of the earth, and that other peoples are only supernumeraries, a kind of afterthought, or mistriven bye-blow of the great spirit, or the superior beings who first populated the earth. Thus the wretched nomad Chyens, who wander about the mountain ranges of the south, believe that they were originally the most favoured race, and were only reduced by chicanery to their present miserable state, roving here and there without lands of their own, and having considerable difficulty even in keeping themselves alive in an all but naked state. A Chinese sept declare that they are descended from the first men, who lived in the mountains of Shuh, which were so high that the dogs took fright at the sun and kept up a continual howling, under the impression that they must certainly be burnt up. In Wuh, rival archæologists declare that the oxen in their hill ranges did not know which was the sun and which the moon, both of them were so near, and used foolishly to go up to their necks in the streams at midnight and bellow because of the terrific heat. All these hill tribes believe that they are nearer to the heavens whence the first dwellers upon earth came, when they abandoned their homes of bliss to settle here. The Kassyas, who are very close blood-relations of the Kachyens, do not hesitate to connect themselves directly with the stars. These luminaries, they say, first appeared in connection with a gigantic tree. "Up this climbed a great multitude, and when they were fairly among the branches, another multitude came and hewed the tree. Wherefore all the multitude remained above, where they form a great bazaar, and are the stars we see." (Colonel Yule.) Similarly the Burmese believe the sun, the moon, and all the stars simply to be houses of Nat-dewahs, the happy dwellers in the six superior seats of Passion. These beings take a great interest in mundane affairs, and an earthly king goes there immediately on his death. The heavenly bodies only seem to us to be round because of their great distance from the Southern Island, upon which mankind dwells. In reality they are shaped like the flame of a candle. This is proved by the religious Zaht of Naymee. When the chariot came which was to convey the pious king to the happy realms, it appeared at first to the watching crowd that there were two moons in the sky, one in

the east and one in the west. But when the chariot arrived it was seen to be high and lofty like a house. Therefore it is a mistake to suppose that the sun or any of the constellations is really a globe. Such notions are common to all the hill tribes, and help, on the one hand, to foster their own opinion of their own superiority and antiquity, and, on the other, to preserve the geniolatry which is their invariable form of worship.

The Kachyens are simply a branch of the vast horde of "Singhpos" proper who inhabit the northern Assam hills, and are better known to us under the title of "Nágas" and "Garos." The southern branch is mixed up with "Kakoos" and "Shans" (whose main representatives are the Siamese), and they trend down into native Burma as far as the hills permit them, the farthest south being in about the latitude of Tagoung, one of the ancient Burmese capitals. Those of the race who have settled in Hookong and Assam attach great importance to the name of Singhpo, and call their eastern and southern brethren "Kachyens" and "Kakoos," as a term of reproach, deeming it the greatest possible insult to be so addressed themselves. Probably they are the mysterious "Gold-teeth" of whom Ser Marco Polo writes; but if they are, they have long since lost the wealth and civilisation, if it can be called such, which led them to adopt the singular custom of casing their incisors.

A "Kachyen" village is always as nearly as possible on the summit of a mountain peak, either in a sheltered glen near a rivulet, or straggling loosely up a gentle slope near the top. It is no easy matter to obtain access to their villages even for a European. A pure Burman would never dream of such an undertaking, and among the northern tribes it would be little less dangerous for a white man. Some years ago a reckless, harum-scarum Englishman, who was hardly responsible for his actions, explored the river north of Bhamaw, and took it into his head that some Kachyens peacefully viewing him from the bank were meditating hostilities. He therefore incontinently proceeded to thin them out with his express rifle. The consequence is that, ever since, any European venturing into these latitudes is forthwith made a target of, and the establishment of better relations seems a very long way off, even to the patient Romish missionaries. Farther south, however, some of the villages are more accessible, though only under proper credentials. One of the most friendly, though never visited by more than one or two Europeans, is that of Wah Pong, a hamlet perched upon one of the highest peaks, almost direct east of Bhamaw. The path is over an alluvial plain, through secondary jungle for twelve or fifteen miles, and then the hill rises suddenly, steep out of the plain. It requires all the sure-footedness of a Thibet pony to climb the narrow path as it winds up the rough boulder-covered slopes, shaded by gigantic trees that hang creepers and parasites to entrap the unwary. Close upon the summit the incline becomes much more gentle, until at last a level grassy avenue

leads into the village. Just outside this is the tomb of the last Sawbwa, or more properly Pawmaing, as the subordinate chieftains are called. It is a square, double-roofed bamboo structure, seven or eight feet high, with a trench dug all round about it, and a post standing by, nailed on which is the skull of the buffalo sacrificed over the grave, to prove to the spirits that due respect had been paid to them. The graves of the common people, close at hand, are marked with a conical grass structure, like a diminutive haystack, hollowed out and mounted on a short post. These last for about a year, and are not renewed. There is no use in perpetuating unpleasant memories, and they are mostly women anyhow. The men usually die on a foray, and the crows and kites eat them.

A formal avenue always exists as the entrance to a Kachyen village. There is only one, because, for the most part, the hill is only accessible from the one side, and in any case visitors are not wanted. The only place the villagers themselves wish to go to is down to the plains to visit Bhamaw, or more frequently to "sorn upon" ill-protected lowlanders, and for that purpose one path is good enough. Besides, the spirits have to be kept out, and an increased number of entries would only multiply troubles. On each side of the broad grassy pathway are a number of bamboo posts, four feet high or thereabouts, and every ten paces or so, taller ones, with strings stretching across the path, supporting small stars of split rattan and other emblems. There are also certain hieroglyphics which may constitute a kind of embryo picture-writing, but are understood by none but the Meetway, or priest. Farther in are wooden knives stuck into the tree trunks, wooden dahs, and spears and axes and other weapons for the use of the spirits when they come that way. The Kachyen religion is a worship of spirits good and bad, but mostly bad. They are an unlovely set altogether. Even the good demons are very short in the temper, and have to be kept as well supplied as possible, lest they should become angry and do mischief promiscuously. The villagers, therefore, do not want the Nats, good or bad, to come near them at all, and as these spirits are considerate enough to enter only by the recognised thoroughfare, it is a comparatively simple matter to keep them out, if only there is no parsimony.

The whole worship is deprecatory. The spirits cannot, or will not, do good to anybody except by harming somebody else, and such a requirement is not to be thought of, except in regard to a neighbouring community. A witch or a layman who voluntarily held communings with the demons would be tied hand and foot and pitched over the nearest precipice, or at best bundled out of the village with the anathemas of the priest. Hence the apparatus of the village avenue. To remind the Nats that offerings have been made and due regard taken for their comfort, some symbol of these is left behind. The bullock's skull is nailed to a post; the bamboo pipe that contained the rice-beer is tied to the stone where the libation was made; the baskets that con-

tained the fowls and ducks and pigs are suspended on long poles. Thus the spirits have no difficulty in ascertaining that proper respect is being paid to them, and suitable arrangements made for their refection. There is no necessity that they should go into the village itself and annoy their worshippers by questing about for food. On the other hand, if they want to go a-hunting, or to have a fight among themselves—the hill deities, like the old Scandinavian gods, delight in nothing so much as a good set to—the groaning and shrieking of the storm wind, and the thunderclap, and the flashing lightning announce it to the cowering villagers, and they keep indoors and pray that the exultant victor demons may be too tired after the battle to exhibit further prowess on humble hill-folk; if the Nats want such diversion, there the weapons are ready for them outside, and they can make a start at once without troubling any one. The village Meetway or Toomsah mumbles a prayer or two in a queer, droning fashion every now and again just to make matters a little surer, and keeps the Nats in a fairly good temper. But there is practically no regular ceremonial worship. The status of the priests shows this. When he is not actually inspired or possessed by demons, the Kachyen priest sinks into the commonplace reality of an ordinary layman. During the seasons of spiritual influence the chiefs bow down low before the Meetway, but in his daily life he sinks into a common labourer, and carries a pig on his back, like any ordinary mortal. Yet the embryo priest has to pass through a very trying ordeal before he blossoms out into a full-blown Meetway. There is no suggestion of intellectual power or familiarity with religious ritual. A ladder is provided with rungs made of sword blades, with the sharp edge upwards, and this leads on to a platform thickset with the most keen-pointed spear-heads. The neophyte attains full rank, and arrives at the dignity of great Meetway, by climbing up this ladder, and seating himself on the spiked platform. If he is worthy of the post his bare feet suffer no inconvenience, and he has no awkwardness in sitting down afterwards. There should be an entire freedom from all after traces of visible or apparent injury. If unsuccessful, he suffers no other penalty from his fellow burghers. The test is in itself sufficient punishment for the over-confident. Meetways and Toomsahs are not abundant. There are few villages without one, but he is hardly so honoured as the ordeal would warrant, and there are, therefore, comparatively few aspirants to ecclesiastical dignity.

The village itself is very straggling. Every man builds his house where he pleases, and in what line he pleases, so that there is no semblance of a street, and in fact no two houses stand close together. There is a rude kind of stockade of bamboos and spiked thorn-bushes round about to keep out wild animals. The chief's residence in Wah Pong is the nearest to the gate, and differs in no way externally from the other houses. These are built entirely of bamboo, and are barrack-like structures, 150 or 200 feet long, and from 30 to 40 feet broad. In

height they do not exceed 20 feet ; and as the flooring is raised above the surface of the ground, it is impossible to stand upright except in the centre of the house. The thatch is composed of coarse grass, and the eaves come down to within a few feet of the ground, so that, as there are no windows, the interior is dismal enough. But they keep out the storms, which are very plentiful on the hills, and that is all that is wanted. Each house has a private door, at which only the family may enter. A stranger entering by the family door would provoke the spirit guardian of the house, and there would be a terrible to-do on the spot. The house Nats, though possibly a shade above the jungle demons, are still very morose, unreasoning creatures, and would be as likely as not to wreak their vengeance on a member of the household as on the offending visitor. To uninitiated eyes there are no more points about the family door than about any other, and it is necessary therefore to be very careful how you enter a Kachyen house uninvited. It is not at all impossible that you yourself may form the immediate propitiatory sacrifice on the part of the household to the offended domestic demon. That person usually locates himself on the top of one or other of the side posts. He has no special regard for his involuntary hosts, but becomes used to their presence, and sometimes actually does them a service by falling foul of robbers who have disturbed his meditations. But the good man of the house would much rather be without him for all that, for he requires constant attention in the way of offerings, and has a share of almost every dish that is cooked on the establishment. The best point about him is that he is so sluggish.

Just outside the chief's house are several posts, at which the periodical village sacrifices are made, and all round the eaves of the houses are fixed skulls of buffaloes, pig, deer, and other wild animals. Inside there is no furniture whatever, and between the absence of windows and the abundance of smoke from the wood fire, it is almost impossible to see about you. At the head of a short ladder, which serves as a means of ascent, there is a kind of ante-room ; but, except in the chief's house, the remainder of the space consists of one long chamber. The Sawbwa has two or three private rooms, about the size and having externally much the appearance of cattle-stalls with doors to them. The fire, which on the breezy hill-tops is as much wanted for warmth as for cooking, burns in a long wooden trough filled up with earth, and is usually situated in the centre of the room, or a little on one side. In many of the villages the young men and girls do not sleep in their parents' houses, but spend the night all together in the same house, the youths on the one side and the maidens on the other, with very little more than the breadth of the fire-place between them. Unchastity is not at all uncommon. In fact, a Kachyen unmarried woman is but lightly esteemed until she is proved to be a child-bearing reality. She then acquires a corresponding value in the matrimonial market, and a complete revolution takes place in the views of maiden morality. Infidelity after marriage is, however,

most savagely dealt with. One or both parties are commonly put to death, and no inquiries are made by the neighbours. As with other savage races, the women do nearly all the work—hew wood, draw water, clear the jungle for the crops, hoe up the ground, sow the seed, and gather in the harvest, and yet find time to weave their own dresses and make the neat, embroidered, tagged bags, without which the Kachyen is never to be seen, and inside which he carries his pipe, tobacco, betel apparatus, and, as often as not, a little bamboo flask of potent rice spirit, and a lump of home-grown opium, wrapped up in a plantain-leaf. The men consume vast quantities of “sheroo,” fermented rice-beer, and would probably never be sober were it not that the supply of rice is limited on their exposed lands, and the commodity is not so easily carried off from the plains as cattle and fowls. On the other hand, they have as much opium as they please, yet there are almost no victims to the dire narcotic. The mode of obtaining the drug is very primitive: they simply cut a gash or two in the green capsules of the poppy, collect the juice on broad leaves, and dry it in the sun. Then it is ready to be smoked, and they use long metal pipes, like the Chinese, for the purpose.

They rear no animals but pigs, and these they may often be seen carrying down to the lowland villages for sale, along with small quantities of silver and cotton, when they are in a peaceable mood. But, as a rule, cattle-lifting is preferred. Any buffaloes or bullocks that may be seen about their villages are sure to have been stolen. When we visited Wah Pong, the men were all away on some expedition of the kind, though the chieftain's wife declared that they were hunting, which, however, is an undertaking that does not necessitate the enlistment of the entire able-bodied male population. The lady was very hospitable, and supplied a large dish of a somewhat meagre compound of bamboo-shoots and the leaves of forest trees, in consistency something between cock-a-leekie and an over-boiled cabbage. A diet of this continuously for a few weeks might enable one to live on grass. Yet, except when the Kachyens have been on a foray, they have little else to eat. Little wonder that the average stature of the men is about five feet. The sheroo and the plates of fermenting rice which were supplied to us as a kind of dessert were heady enough to demand something decidedly more solid in the way of ballast.

The French Christian Brothers and an American Mission have been working among the Kachyens for some years, but without result. There are no converts, and, in fact, it is difficult to gain admission to the villages at all. They do not believe in the existence of one supreme being, and cannot be brought to understand it, though they hope for a future life. Literature there is none, not even a written character. The creating spirits, they say, gave in the beginning to all the nations a scheme of written characters. But the Kachyens were hungry, and they ate up the hide on which their alphabet was carved, and so, ever since, the Kachyen carries his writing in his breast. It manifests

itself in a steadfast incapacity ever to forget an injury, and in a firm holding by first principles—the good old rule. The French missionaries relate that they went not long ago to a new village, and found none but women and children in the place. They inquired where the men were, and were candidly told that half of them had gone out cattle-lifting in one direction, and the other half the other way. They were invited to stay till next morning, when they would see the men and have some beef, and they did. They stayed and saw the men and had some beef, and afterwards announced that it would take centuries to convert these people. Nevertheless, if they were properly treated by their neighbours, these hill-folk would probably be very harmless. In features they are unlike the Burmese, their aquiline noses and slighter frames, together with their prominent molars, showing their kinship to the northern and western tribes. The universal weapon is the dah, a formidable square-headed knife, about three feet long, and with a heavy weight of metal about it. This is carried in a wooden half-sheath, secured with loops of bamboo, and suspended across the body over the right shoulder, so that the hilt is ready to the hand. These dabs are used for every imaginable purpose, from paring the nails to lopping an enemy's head off; from clearing the jungle for the crops to carving the delicate tracery on the bamboo pipes. Most Kachyens carry guns of home manufacture, curious things without stocks, fired from the cheek, and consequently not particularly dangerous. In warfare they are looked upon as useless, except to scare the foe, and the sole reliance is placed upon the dah. That weapon flashes out upon the slightest provocation, and in riding through the jungle, if you suddenly come on a string of mountaineers, every sword is drawn on the instant and flourished defiantly till your intentions are ascertained. A Kachyen will allow no stranger, even in a village, to pass him except on the left or sword side. A brandished dah or a savage thrust will soon remind the careless man of the impropriety of his conduct. In the jungle paths this formality is most rigorously observed even between friends. It is desirable to be acquainted with this custom before having anything to do with the mountaineers. Learning from practical experience is trying to the nerves. They make very fair powder, selling it in big lumps. If broken down and steeped in brandy it granulates fairly well, but there is too much sulphur in it, and it fouls the barrel very fast.

As already said, though the Kachyens are nominally subject to their Burmese and Chinese neighbours, the suzerainty exercised is of a very fallacious kind. The tribesmen really have a patriarchal government of their own, and acknowledge no other allegiance. The Sawbwes are hereditary chieftains, the youngest son succeeding to his father. The elder brothers are expected to gather a following and go out to found villages of their own, in alliance with the parent townships, of course, and prepared to support it in the intertribal wars that are perpetually being waged. The chief receives a leg or other portion of every animal

slaughtered and a basket of paddy, or unhusked rice, from every householder in his district once a year. Besides this, the Sawbwa has crops of his own, which are cultivated by a system of *corvées*. All the men in the village give one day in the year for cutting down the jungle growth; another for preparing the ground; a third for sowing out the grain; and finally, one for gathering in the harvest. Each Sawbwa has, in addition, an establishment of slaves, captives in war, or men sold for debt, who finish off what work the service of the villagers may not suffice to get through. At feasts a portion of all the delicacies go to the chieftain's house, and a cup from every pipe of sheroo, or arrack, also goes for his solace. The abundant store thus obtained is employed in entertaining strangers, supplying out-villages whose crops have failed, or who have been plundered by their neighbours, and in charity. When a chief of the elder stock, owning sovereignty over a large number of villages, wants his clansmen to assemble, he kills an ox, cooks it, and offers it up to the Nats. Then the greater part of the carcase is made up into little balls, each of which is wrapped in a plantain-leaf, and tied up with narrow strips of cane. One strip means that the receiver is to come on the following day, two on the next but one, and so on. This simple method economises time and outlay. All are enabled to arrive on the same day for the deliberation, and the suzerain is not burdened with the presence for any length of time of a number of men, for whom he has no accommodation, and whose support is a very serious drain on his scanty storehouses; besides that they quaff gigantic beakers of sheroo, and quarrel like wolves, or sparrows, or love-birds, or such-like irritable creatures. Members of a family are assembled in the same way for the avenging of a blood feud. Not a few of the southern Sawbwars are on terms of a certain kind with the Mandalay court, and occasionally appear in the palace on audience days, with their silver tribute flowers, or their modicum of ore and orpiment in recognition of the title among the Umbrella-bearing chiefs accorded to them. But the relations are of a very stand-offish character. The hill-chiefs are perfectly well aware that it is at their own option whether they appear or not, and that no punitive expedition can get at them. The Mandalay townfolk are inclined to be afraid of the ragged, gawking, fiery bodyguard that follows in the Sawbwa's train, and are relieved when they go without cutting somebody's throat. A couple of years ago a hill chief was told by the Burmese governor of the plains below that his title as a Burman "Woon" was to be taken away, because no homage had been paid for three successive grand audience days at the steps of the Golden Throne. The haughty Sawbwa simply spat on the ground and said: "When I take that spittle back into my mouth the King may take back the rank he gave me." He strode out of the house and swept off to his mountain eyrie, and a week later the Burmese governor had to lament three of the villages in his district harried and burnt by the hot-blooded chief.

The Kachyens are bloodthirsty and turbulent enough nowadays,

but there are men still living who remember them as good-natured, easy-going people, glad to receive visitors as a relief to the monotony of their existence. Now, however, they attack all alike, and the Chinese and Shan caravans that traverse the passes into Yunan and Sz'chuen fare as badly as the Burmans, unless they pay heavy toll to be allowed to carry their stores of silk and tin and jade down to the safety of the bazaars. The actual physical difficulties of the western overland route into China are not great, if only the Kachyens were conciliated, and this would even now be no insuperable task in the hands of a power which was at once firm and friendly, but it will never be effected with native Burmese rule.

SHWAY YOE.

A Visit to Delphi.

THE facilities for inland travelling in modern Greece are not great, nor is the aim of the explorer rendered easier by prompt and easy access to such information as is to be had concerning routes, methods, and safety of communication. At Athens, the necessary instruction is, after a little trouble, to be picked up; but it is not everybody who approaches Greece from its capital. My object was to pass leisurely from Corfu to the Ægean by the Isthmus of Corinth, halting on the way to visit some, at least, of the memorable places that lie to right and left of that famous track. One of the sacred spots I aspired to scan was Delphi, the cradle of Hellenic civilisation, though now a mere *magni nominis umbra*. All, however, I could ascertain, after the most diligent inquiry at Corfu, was that I must postpone the gratification of my curiosity till I reached Patras. There, doubtless, I should learn how best to wend my way to the Castalian Fountain and the ancient haunt of vanished oracles.

But though it is not possible in the chief of the Ionian Islands to ascertain anything whatever concerning the roads, conveyances, and security of the Grecian mainland, no one can help feeling that Corfu is thoroughly Hellenic, in the modern sense of that word. The Greek of to-day, as far as I have observed him, is an inferior Italian—with inferior traditions, inferior aspirations, and inferior character, yet recalling in his tastes, habits, and manners the people of Magna Græcia. Save for the picturesque dresses of the fellows from the opposite Albanian coast, you might fancy that Corfu was one of the small seaboard cities of the “Regno.” One observes the same familiar talent for doing nothing inoffensively; the same remarkable capacity for making a cup of coffee or a tumbler of lemonade, supplemented by a small newspaper, consisting mostly of advertisements, serve for the occupation of a couple of hours; the same eager facility for talking about nothing at all, and consuming as much tobacco as a reasonable economy will permit. Outside the town of Corfu you find yourself in a very inferior Italy indeed; for the Italians are genuinely proud of their recovered greatness and acquired liberty, and have borne without a murmur heavier taxation than is inflicted on any other European people, in order to *far figura*, to cut a figure commensurate with the suppressed importance of their country. But the Greeks, and the inhabitants of Corfu more especially, make little or no effort to maintain even the material advantages that have been bequeathed them. Nothing could well have been more costly than the barracks England erected at Corfu while the Ionian Islands yet belonged to us; and the solid walls and almost cyclopean masonry of the forts still

remain. But what in them, and about them, can go to wreck and ruin, are gradually tending to that consummation. Not a shilling is spent to preserve buildings upon which untold sums were originally lavished. The barracks were crammed with troops, for the controversy was still going on concerning the Greco-Turkish frontier; and the dirt and neglect that surrounded and stamped the place are indescribable. The magnificent roads made during our occupation are left to the untender mercies of time and the seasons; and in driving from Corfu to Paleocastrizza, a distance of some sixteen miles, the journey is considerably lengthened by the necessity to which by no means fastidious drivers must defer of steering perpetually from one side of the road to the other, in order to avoid the ruts, holes, and pitfalls with which a once splendid highway is now seamed. Even as it was, my companion and I had to put up with a considerable amount of jolting; so that, in spite of the hoary olive woods, carpeted with wild flowers, through which the road for the most part passes, it was with some satisfaction we descried the convent-crowned crag of Paleocastrizza soaring into the blue air from the blue sea, only another half-hour in front of us. In a little land-locked bay at the foot of the hill, sitting on the myrtle and arbutus that grow stuntedly out of the very shingle, we ate our bread, figs, and oranges, and concurred in believing that here it was Nausicaa received Ulysses, after washing the garments destined for her nuptials, and conducted him to the court of Alcinous. Here, too, we convinced ourselves, all difficulties and authorities to the contrary notwithstanding, the Phæacian galley which conveyed Ulysses to Ithaca was on its return changed to stone, as described in the thirteenth book of the *Odyssey*, by the vengeance of Neptune, just as it was entering the port. If any one doubts it, let him go to Paleocastrizza. There, sitting where we sat, he will see a rock as strongly resembling a petrified galley as either nature or art could make it. Let him also ascend to the convent, and learn how dull, ignorant, and abject, piety can become in unworthy hands. I never visited an Italian monastery, no matter how poor or how remote, without finding abundant intelligence and sympathy, if of a singular kind. But the sea-gulls lazily flapping over the Adriatic seemed more human than the two tonsured custodians of the convent of Paleocastrizza.

On the following evening, an hour before sunset, we were on board the Austrian steamer that was to convey us to the Gulf of Corinth. No one had been able to say when it would start, and in all such matters you must take your chance when you sail in Grecian seas. Once fairly started, however, one is amply rewarded for past uncertainty and confusion. No indolence of man can alter the highway of the sea. Its ruts are of its own making, and these it speedily repairs. It happened to be smoother on this occasion than macadam or asphalte, and in the colour of the dying day the Albanian coast stood out, transfigured. "Suli's rock and Parga's shore" were within hail, while on the right towered the mountains of the island of Santa Maura, better known to the

stranger as Leucadia. Shortly, all these, and more, were wrapped in night. But morning brought kindred sights, and long before we anchored off Zante we could scent the flowers for which the island "Zante, Zante, Fior di Levante," is celebrated. For less than a shilling I bought a huge bouquet of the rarest flowers, for which in Covent Garden one would have had to disburse three guineas, to find half an hour later that my travelling companion had got one still larger and still more beautiful for sixpence. It was well on into the afternoon before we lifted anchor, drawing ever nearer to Ithaca, and seeming to pass among almost as many islands as form the Cyclades. Long before we approached Mesolonghi darkness again had descended. We could descry it only by its lights, and it was evident that it would be late before we reached Patras, where we proposed to disembark and pass the night. Our notion was that we should be able to get across from Patras to the Scala of Salona somehow or other; and once at Salona, Delphi would be accessible. We knew that our steamer did not stop at Scala, but from Patras made for the head of the gulf. So, as soon as Patras was reached, we dropped down with our baggage, amid a clamour of boatmen, strongly recalling Naples, and were rowed in darkness to the shore. My companion, with our effects, was to make for the Hôtel de la Grande-Bretagne as best he could, and I was to go straight to a certain consul, and learn from him, if still out of bed, how to get to Delphi.

Once face to face with this worthy person, all my schemes for performing the journey were dissipated. There was no earthly means of getting from Patras to Scala unless one took one's chance of tossing about several days in the gulf in a sailing boat. The winds, the currents, all were declared to be incalculable. I inquired if there was not a little steam tug of some kind. Yes, there was, but it did not carry more coal than would take it across the gulf, and how was it to get back again? Suddenly this question was put to me, "But why did you not go on by the steamer you came by? It does not touch at Scala in going up the gulf, but it does in coming down, and you would thus be at Salona shortly after noon to-morrow."

Matters would have been greatly simplified had I been vouchsafed this information at Corfu. We should not have quitted the steamer, and should willingly have resigned ourselves to another night on board to achieve our object. Had the steamer already left Patras? For it was only to touch there, and then proceed on its journey, and of that we must take our chance. It was night, and pitch dark; and there were no signals in the harbour to tell us whether the boat had gone or not. I rushed off to the hotel as fast as ill-paved streets would let me, to find my travelling companion comfortably ensconced in bed. I hurriedly explained the situation, and that if we did not succeed in getting aboard again before the steamer had started we should have to wait another week before we could make for the abode of the Muses. A hand-barrow for the reconveyance of our luggage was with difficulty obtained, and

away we went stumbling through the dark streets of Patras down to the equally dark quay. "Had the boat gone?" "No;" and away we were pulled through the still water by four urchins, who at once began quarrelling about the division of the spoil we had promised them in case we were not too late. Presently we saw something black and big loom out of the water, and then we knew it was all right. It was all right, however, only in one sense. Our berths had gone, and it was plain we should have to spend the night on deck. In ordinary times this is no great hardship in such a climate as that of Greece, even at the end of March; but the vessel was crowded with Albanian volunteers, and as soon as steam was up they poured into the fore part of the vessel with their beds, their rugs, and their malodorous selves, and made night hideous with unsavoury snoring.

It is not every night, however, that is spent under the consciousness that with dawn the summits of Helicon and Parnassus will tower into view on one side, and Acro-Corinth will soar into the air on the other; and that all around will be mountains and shores still peopled with the prehistoric fables and the human history of a people who have left behind them a matchless mass of myths and social records. We may soon expect to see the Isthmus of Corinth disappear, and steamers will then proceed straight up the Gulf of Corinth to Athens. At present they are brought up short at Lutràki; passengers and goods are conveyed across the neck of land in omnibuses and wagons to Kalamàki, and there they are put upon another steamer and conveyed in a few hours through the Gulf of Salamis to Athens. There is nothing, therefore, to detain the steamers that traffic in the Corinthian Gulf long at Lutràki; and, intending as we did to visit Corinth later, we were glad to be again descending the Gulf on our way to the Scala of Salona.

A big name, particularly in Greece, often does duty for a very small thing; and Scala is the "port" of Salona, the ancient Amphissa. Scala consists of a khan, a few houses, many boatmen, and half a dozen vehicles. One of these last we engaged to take us to Salona, or, as I will call it, Amphissa, a distance of about ten miles. This journey we were assured we must make if we wanted to visit Delphi; for at Amphissa, and from Amphissa alone, was there a good road thither, and at Amphissa we should procure horses or mules for the expedition. The information was utterly incorrect; for there is a road from Scala to Delphi by Chryso, though from Chryso to Delphi it is only a mule-track, and it was unnecessary to go to Amphissa at all. The mistake, however, was immaterial, and, indeed, perhaps a fortunate one, for Amphissa is worth a visit. Such madcap driving as our charioteer indulged in from Scala to Amphissa I never elsewhere experienced. Indeed, it cannot properly be designated driving at all. Sitting with his legs dangling over the side of the driving-box, and twisting cigarettes or smoking them, he talked to his rough, competent little horses, but never

handled the whip or the reins. Amid clouds of dust—all roads in Greece are dusty—the animals galloped along at about fourteen miles an hour, twisting from side to side of the road, and only kept from leaving it by the charm that lurked in the mystic objurgations addressed to them at critical moments by our Hellenic Jehu. Shortly before we reached Amphissa we were overtaken by another vehicle of exactly the same pattern, and urged along in precisely the same manner, and by dint of similar incantations. Then a regular chariot race began, as to which should enter Amphissa first; and between rows of olives we raised Olympian dust with axles that must indeed have glowed. We won by about two lengths, drawing up before a khan that scarcely boded either a warm welcome or goodly cheer. We had fortified ourselves with a letter to a shopkeeper in the place, whom we found doling out an infinitesimal quantity of sugar to a barefooted, bareheaded maiden, his only customer. He seemed delighted to have an excuse for leaving his store and accompanying us back to the khan. As, however, he spoke no known language but his own, and as I found that what there lingers with me of the Homeric speech of my schooldays is scant, and was utterly unintelligible, we wandered about in search of a pundit who the worthy grocer and haberdasher had made us understand could talk Italian. In the course of the search we made acquaintance with several citizens of the place, dressed in the picturesque Albanian costume, and who all offered us coffee and gum arabic sweetened with honey. The discovery of the interpreter seemed a matter of utter indifference as compared with this hospitable ceremonial. At last the linguistic go-between was unearthed, and then we were able to make known our wishes to visit Delphi, alias Castri, the name by which it is now known to the natives of Greece. A bargain was soon struck, and two horses, with two guides, were to be outside the khan at six o'clock the following morning.

Partly, no doubt, from a genuine wish to be polite and good-natured, but partly also from a deep-seated craving for human society, no matter how unentertaining, our newly made friends never deserted us for the rest of the day. Only one of them could really hold discourse with us; but that seemed immaterial. A Greek, like an Italian, cannot conceive that any human being should wish to be alone; and his notion of performing the rites of hospitality is to give just as much of his presence as possible. One would gladly have exchanged this for some food that could be eaten, or for some bed that could be slept upon. But there was neither; and we managed as best we could without them. Even had there been anything to lie down upon but floors of unutterable filth, and bundles of wrappers that seemed to have been huddled round the unwashed forms of many generations of the descendants of the Locrians, sleep would have been out of the question. In Amphissa the day belongs to the children; the night belongs to the dogs. Both are about equally noisy. All through the darkness the dogs, a huge shaggy

breed, howled, bayed, and battled. I doubt if any one could have turned on his pillow, supposing him to have possessed such a thing, without arousing the watchful ears and awakening the deep-mouthed throats of that canine chorus. Amphissa was once a mighty town; it is now an unnoticeable village; all that is left of the greatness of old, mentioned by Pausanias, being the ruins of the walls of its Acropolis, and these had been so pulled down and built up again for other purposes, and again let go to ruin, that they no longer possess any meaning or significance, beyond affording a fresh text for any one who wishes to preach upon the vanity of human life and the mutability of human greatness. The situation of Amphissa is still beautiful, and that is all that can be said of it. The mountains are behind it, the Crissean plain and the Gulf of Corinth below it; and its little peddling trade is supported by the people who till the olive-groves around it.

I should think the whole world presents no such contrast between past greatness and present nothingness as the site and neighbourhood of Delphi. The Chryso that has been spoken of is of course the ancient Crisa, founded by the Cretans on an agreeable slope at the lower end of the gorge of the Pleistus; and Delphi originally was only a local Crissean sanctuary. But when the Dorians settled at the foot of Parnassus, Delphi was brought into association with Tempe, and by degrees was placed under the protection of the Amphictyonic States, and became the sacred centre of the Hellenic world, being withdrawn from the authority of its mother-city, though not without considerable resistance on the part of Crisa. All this one may read in many an erudite volume; but there is nothing to help the imagination to confirm it in the barren, stony, all but trackless mountain territory that surrounds the former haunt of Apollo. In going to Delphi, or, as I have said it is called by the country folk, Castri, we left Chryso below us, and so got nearer to the home of the eagles. It goes without saying that the ride abounded in charm—the charm of solitude; wild flowers, mountain outlines, blossoming scrub, and recurrent glimpses of the lake-like Gulf of Corinth far below. But streams there are none, woods there are none, ruins there are none, roads there are none. It is like riding through a primeval world, where nothing has ever happened save the periodical revolution of the unpeopled seasons. It is almost impossible to believe, and wholly impossible to picture to yourself, that you are journeying where once tens of thousands of enthusiastic and highly civilised pilgrims annually journeyed to the seat of learning and religion, the home of poetry and prophecy, the centre of wealth, law-giving, and national aspiration. Delphi was the headquarters of Apollo; and Apollo was, as Curtius says, the supreme Exegetes, the ultimate source of legality. “In all questions concerning the foundation of new sanctuaries, and the institution of the worship of gods, heroes, and the dead, he sate as the native maker of the law to all the world, on his throne in the centre of the earth.” Once, and once only, we met some sheep, tended by a couple

of shepherd lads, with an earthenware vessel at their side. One of our guides, a young, good-looking chap, as lithe and supple as a chamois, darted off at the top of his speed, raised the vessel to his lips, and drained deeply. Water is sadly scarce in Greece, and the very name of it inspirits the Greek peasant as the mention of beer or cider inspirits the English bucolic. So excited was he by his pull at the cold water that he drew his pistol from his girdle, cocked it, made believe to aim at an eagle that was flying overhead many hundred yards beyond range, exclaimed "Turchia!" and made the mountains ring with patriotic laughter. It was his way of conveying to us that if Greece had to fight Turkey, Turkey would share the fate of the eagle when brought within reach of the sportsman.

Probably so much power, temporal and spiritual, was never before or since concentrated in one spot as once at Delphi. Here Apollo announced to man the mind and dictates of Zeus. Even the Greek Calendar fell under the superintendence of Delphi. It was under the sanction of Delphi that the Olympian festivals were established. It was Delphi that taught the great Hellenic doctrine of harmonious development. "Know thyself" and "Moderation in all things" were two of the inscriptions to be read over the porch of the temple. Though Apollo came to Delphi through trackless forests, it was imperative that roads not only secure but commodious should lead to his sanctuary. Hence the very width of the road to Delphi acquired sacred significance, and its gauge of five feet four inches prevailed throughout the greater part of Greece. Thus Delphi, both directly and indirectly, helped to maintain the sentiment of common nationality, to regulate religious worship, to determine chronology, to deepen the moral consciousness of the people, to advance colonisation, and to spread a many-sided culture. Its influence upon art was equally strong. The Temple of Apollo was the germ of the noblest architecture of Greece; and thence music and poetry drew their most powerful inspiration, just as at the same time it remained a great political centre for the entire Hellenic world. But it was its political character that concealed the seeds of its ruin. The time came when, by reason of the fratricidal struggle between the states of Greece, and mainly between Athens and Sparta, Delphi had to take a side. For a season it strove craftily to hold the balance between the two; but when that operation became impossible, its influence declined, and its authority as a central umpire necessarily disappeared. Even by the time of the great Persian war it had fallen into discredit. Its oracles had proved cowardly and irresolute, and strove to keep back some of the Amphietyonic States from patriotic action. At last its original aim and purport vanished, and, in flagrant violation of its fundamental law and meaning, sanguinary victories won by Hellenes over Hellenes were commemorated by tablets at Delphi.

The village or hamlet of Castrì occupies the site of ancient Delphi. Some few excavations have been made by German enthusiasts; some

small sections of fallen columns have been set on end ; a narrow strip of marble pavement has been cleared of superincumbent rubbish, and on one side of the excavation Greek inscriptions have been let into the earthen wall. They all seem utterly out of place ; and despite the fact of remembering where one is standing, one cannot help wondering how they got there. Round them are small primitive dwellings, tenanted by a simple and unlettered people. Nor are there many of these. The place scarcely deserves the name of a village. We had fortified ourselves with a line from our friend the grocer and haberdasher at Amphissa to the head man of the place. There was no difficulty in finding him. He was a splendid fellow to look at, six-foot two in his buskins, with a head like St. Luke, a magnificent model for any one in search of the picturesque. His general appearance was savage enough, but his eyes had an unusual mildness in them : and after reading the letter, he was evidently disposed to do anything he could for us. But again the difficulty of oral communication arose. Again, however, it was settled by the appearance of a peasant who had been a sailor, who had command of perhaps fifty Italian words, most of them pertinent to common conversation. Every male denizen of the place mustered round us as soon as they perceived that we were under the protection of the head man of Castrì ; and we were favoured with their society for the rest of our visit. They were keenly anxious to know how much territory Greece was to get from Turkey, and with the aid of a small map we were able to enlighten them. They understood all about the value of Epirus and the worth of Janina, and shook their heads gloomily when we said that all present hope of obtaining the latter must be abandoned. In the War of Independence Castrì was attacked and plundered by the Turks, and the horrible traditions of the time still flourish among its dwellers.

In order to give any lengthened description of Delphi, as Delphi, or Castrì, is now, one would have to indulge in some romancing. There is nothing to describe. Mountains, wild flowers, and silence—that is all. Our hosts—for such they evidently considered themselves to be—trooped after us towards the Castalian Fountain, where their wives and daughters were washing the family linen. Their kirtles were tucked up, and it is needless to say that the young and pretty members of this classical laundry let out a reef or two as we approached, while the old crones thought that operation superfluous. The Pythia bathes in the fountain and sits on her tripod no more. The oracles are dumb. We drank of the sacred water above where it was muddied by the industrious vestals of to-day, and chewed some of its cresses. What Muses there were, were up to the elbow in soapsuds. Was there ever such a commentary on the *Sic transit gloria mundi*? Hard by there is still a shrine, but it is dedicated, not to Apollo, but to Saint Elias, who, despite his nominal patronage of the little chapel, is completely overshadowed, as in so many other Greek churches, by the Mother of God. That is the title she is always given ; no metaphorical word like a Madonna being employed to

mitigate the stern directness of the doctrine with which the Blessed among Women is associated. Her face, as pictured in sacred Greek frescoes, is neither gentle nor sad, but awful, far-away, austere, I might almost say abstract. You may see something of it in Cimabue. But the Italians soon made the Mother of God in their own more human image, and dowered her with tears, smiles, and indulgent pity. Nor does one see among Greek believers the same vulgar familiarity with things supposed to be sacred that strikes one among the sacristans, beadles, and ciceroni of Italy. The little church was literally covered with mural decorations, all of them dedicated to the lives of saints, or to the story of the Redemption. One of these represented "the Resurrection;" and while my companion and I were admiring it for its artistic value, the retired mariner, who evidently thought that to us heretical Englishmen the theme of the fresco was novel, attempted to describe it to us in short, crisp sentences denuded of copulatives, and compressed to accommodate his extremely limited acquaintance with the language in which he tried to speak. But his enthusiasm made him roughly eloquent; and when, accompanying the words with pertinent gesticulation, and winding up the story by narrating the triumph of Christ over Death and Hell, he exclaimed, "Cristo morto; Cristo sepolto: niente a Dio! Sorge Cristo, Evviva Cristo!" all the male denizens of Delphi crossed themselves at mention of the name; and Apollo and the Pythia and the Muses' seemed, as Milton says, "with hollow shriek the steep of Delphos leaving."

Close by the church is the monastery of St. Elias, containing one monk. Under an ilex-tree he spread out a mattress and pillows, that we might repose; and as it was impossible to get rid of our retinue even for an instant, much as we naturally desired to be left to that silent solitude which is the true *genius loci* of all places that have a past, we threw ourselves down and feigned slumber. On the grass, and under the trees around, our Delphic following likewise flung themselves, and were soon sleeping and snoring in good earnest. Then we opened our eyes, gazed at the bright blue sky through the dark green foliage, listened to the distant murmur of the most sacred fountain in the world, and pondered many things.

The midday siesta over, we were invited to the house of the head man, and there regaled with dried olives, curds, sour bread, Castalian watercresses steeped in vinegar, and what I should call turpentine if my hospitable friends had not offered it as wine. As we ate, women and children came and timidly glanced at us; one young creature very beautiful, and holding a child in her arms as none but a Greek or an Italian mother knows how to hold a child. All these people are picturesque by unconscious and inevitable instinct. That labourer leaning on his spade is a picture. That matron marching to the well is a flawless composition. That fellow lying along the wall is attitudinising unawares. The various group around us as we fed arranged itself as at

the prompting of some cunning artist. But were we really going? Would we not stay three days? If we would they would kill a kid, and we would all be merry together. The temptation would have been great but for the reflection that for three mortal days we should never be able to stir without being accompanied by the whole population of Delphi. They attended us somewhat on our way, and then once more we were in the company of the mountains. We returned to Amphissa by Chryso, a far more flourishing place than Castrì, though nothing more than a good-sized village. A little way below it, just as the Gulf of Corinth began to broaden out to our gaze, we met a civil engineer, with two attendants and a theodolite. He was making a survey for a road from Scala to Delphi. So, by-and-by, Delphi will be accessible by carriage; and those who want to see it as it still is, had better make haste. For the company of Mr. Cook will soon invade the Castalian Fount, and the personally conducted tours of Mr. Gaze will become familiar with the shrine of Apollo. You will telegraph or telephone to the Pythia Hotel for a bed, and the Oracles of the place will be valets and couriers.



"DID YOU EVER HAVE A BOW AND ARROWS?"

W. H. W. H.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER XVI.

A LAST LOOK.



LATE that afternoon, as Rachel sat over a book by the fireside, Laura came in and walked slowly up the room, pausing for a moment at a side table to handle a little ornament, which rattled as she put it down. When she reached the rug she stood on the further side, with her face slightly averted, looking downward at the fire. She did not speak, but Rachel, turning a leaf, raised her eyes. "Oh!" she said under her breath.

Laura was shaking from head to foot, and deadly pale. She glanced

apprehensively at Rachel, and her lips moved before she uttered a sound. "Yes," she said, "there's some bad news."

Miss Conway leaned forward, fixing her intense eyes on the other's face. "Go on."

"Adam," said Laura. "Adam is dead."

The book slid from Rachel's knee, and she put her hand to her heart. The words sounded like a foolish echo of some horrible, impossible thing which she had already heard. She sat looking at Mrs. Latham. She did not speak; what could be the good of asking questions about the circumstances of a nightmare? She waited for it to pass away.

Laura had been afraid of the news she had to tell; she felt that she did not understand Rachel, and that any explosion of feeling was possible. But this silence was as alarming as the worst. A moment later Rachel's

eyes wandered from her companion's face. She stooped and picked up her book, and closed it carefully, smoothing a doubled leaf.

"It is terrible," said Laura. "So sudden. It was his heart, you know. He died late last night."

"Late last night!" Rachel repeated. There was a flash of terrified insight in her glance. "At Redlands?"

"Yes. You knew he was going there?"

"I knew he had gone. Oh! I understand now; it is true!" She uttered the last words in an awestruck voice.

"Young Chesterton came with the news; Dick's friend, you know. At the first moment I thought he had come to tell me that Dick—— But it seems they telegraphed to him to go down to Redlands, and he sent young Chesterton on with the telegram. Would you like to see it?"

Rachel stretched out her hand, took it, read it, and gave it back, relapsing into an attitude of passive hopelessness.

"Poor Adam!" said Laura; "it is very, very sad. I was afraid you would feel it. I thought you would care."

"Did you?" Miss Conway asked. Her voice had a sound of miserable scorn in it. "Why should you think I would care? *You* don't care; you would have cared if it had been Dick! *He* won't care, either; he is too honest to pretend it. And Mr. Lauriston's sisters won't care; no, nor those others, those Polhills and people."

"Rachel! What do you mean? Why do you say such things?" Mrs. Latham was startled, and her eyes filled with tears. "I don't know much about the Polhills, but I don't see why you should think we are ungrateful. I wouldn't think it of you!"

"Wouldn't you?" said Rachel. "You may if you like!"

"What do you mean?"

"What have we ever done for him?" she answered passionately. "He has helped us all, and we have given him nothing, we did not even believe in his danger, we smiled, and shrugged our shoulders at it. And now he is gone. Ah!" she exclaimed, rising suddenly to her feet, "he has gone to his wife! She loved him, she knew it, she could tell him. Thank God he had that one love;" she turned away and spoke in a broken voice. "What does the rest matter, since he had that? And yet—oh! Adam! Adam! Adam!"

Laura's tears were falling; she stepped forward impulsively, but Rachel drew back, looking dry-eyed at her left hand with the ring on it. "There is his ring," she said, "his pledge that he would come when I wanted him. But he won't now; it is all over. He has gone to his wife. I let him go, what could I do? He said it would be best that he should never come back, but that was for my sake. I say now that it is best for his own."

"Rachel, dearest!" Mrs. Latham exclaimed; but Rachel was gone, gliding from the room with a swift wavering movement, as if she hurried, yet missed some accustomed guidance. Laura dropped into a chair, and

let her tears flow. The shock of her cousin's sudden death, the choking heart-throb of that moment when she had feared that something might have happened to Dick, the dread of utterance which had come upon her when she brought the news to Rachel, had overtaxed her strength. She buried her face in her hands and wept; but after a little while she felt, between her irrepressible sobs, that she at least was guilty of no ingratitude towards Adam.

When she saw Rachel again it was in the dusk of the evening. She was lying on the sofa, clasping a handkerchief and a smelling bottle, when Rachel came back, and stood by her in the firelight, a pale, noble figure with the dusky velvet folds of her gown trailing softly over the floor. Laura unclosed her heavy-lidded eyes and looked up at her friend, half putting forth her hand in an unheeded gesture.

"Don't move," said Rachel. "You are tired, your head aches, you have had too much to bear. But you will be better to-morrow, will you not? And to-morrow I want you to do something for me, if you will."

She spoke in the gentlest tone. Who would have thought it was the same Rachel who, only a couple of hours earlier, cried, "Adam! Adam! Adam!" as if her life were escaping with her breaking voice? She was sad, but self-restrained and still.

"What is it you want me to do?" said the prostrate Laura, looking up faintly.

"I want you to go to Redlands with me."

"To Redlands! To the Hall?"

"No, to the village. There is an inn there, I remember it very well. The 'Falcon,' I think it is, with a sign that stands out in the middle of the road."

Laura sat up. "Yes, the 'Falcon.' But, Rachel, why do you want to go to Redlands? I don't see how I can."

"You must think it over," said Miss Conway. "If you find that you can, you will be doing me a great kindness. If you cannot, I must go alone."

"But why? Are you going to the Hall? Is it that you want to see—him? Oh! Rachel, are you sure that is wise?"

Rachel drew back a step. "No," she said; "I'm not going to the Hall. But you said Mr. Brett was there. I am going to the 'Falcon.' I shall send a messenger to ask him to come to me, I shall say a few words to him, and then I will come away as soon as you please."

"You want to speak to Dick? Why not write?"

Rachel hesitated, considered, and then answered with a slight negative sign. "You must do as you think best," she said, "but I shall go. I suppose if people take any notice they may think it strange; I can't help that. If you could go too, it would be best, no doubt."

"I will go," said Laura. She understood Rachel well enough to know that she was resolved, and she felt that it would be better, as she said, that she should not go alone. She did not understand what she

could want with Dick, but it was a good thing that she should turn to him. He might want friends hereafter, and Rachel might be a useful friend to Dick. "I will go," she said.

Miss Conway smiled. It was like a pale gleam of light. "Thank you," she said. "You have always been very good to me ever since the day he brought you to see me first." She paused. "Did I frighten you this afternoon when you told me about it? I hardly recollect what I said. But you don't know how good a friend he was to me, and you remember that I am all alone; I can't have anything nearer than a friend."

"I hope you have many friends, dear," said Laura.

"People are very kind," Rachel answered. "I hope I have. But while Mr. Lauriston lived, I had only one. Don't think I am ungrateful to you, but I ought to say that. My heart aches with gratitude; well, it is no use talking about it. If one has failed to speak at the right moment, it is only weakness to speak later. And don't think anything more of what I may have said. Honestly, I don't think you could understand it rightly; I have never understood myself, and I don't now!"

"Perhaps you will later," Laura suggested sympathetically.

"I don't care," said Rachel, moving away from the sofa. "Then we will go by an early train to-morrow. I'll look it out, if you don't mind my ringing for lights." There was a crisp rustling of leaves as she hunted in *Bradshaw*. "9.5. Will that do?" she asked presently. "That is the express; we shall be there a little before 11." Laura said that it would do, and Rachel calmly made a note of the time, and wrote a telegram to the landlord of the "Falcon." "We might not find a carriage at the station," she said. Laura watched her, wondering that the passion of the afternoon was so utterly gone.

Nor was there any change in Miss Conway's demeanour when she came down the next morning to an early breakfast. It was true that she ate little, and looked weary, but she was perfectly self-possessed. Laura herself was uneasy, perhaps because she was ignorant of the object of their little expedition, but she felt that Rachel's calmness was reassuring if it were not too good to last.

As they went out of the door the postman came, and, among other letters, delivered one to Mrs. Latham in Dick's handwriting. She opened it on their way to the station, and, having read it, handed it mutely to Rachel, and pretended to go on with the rest of her correspondence. But she sat for more than five minutes with the notice of the sale of a bankrupt's stock of gloves and laces (offering an unrivalled opportunity) grasped firmly in her hand. "Also a large parcel of French and Irish cambric handkerchiefs." She stared at the words till the type seemed stamped on her brain, and then all at once she read them for the first time.

Meanwhile Rachel studied Dick's scrawl, and found a strangely distinct picture traced in the hurried sentences. Young Brett described his arrival at the Hall, and the particulars of his cousin's death. It appeared that Mr. Lauriston had been to his sisters' at Aldermere early in the

day, had come to Redlands without any warning in the afternoon, seemed tired and unwell, and declined food, saying that he had had something to eat on his journey. He shut himself up in the library, and busied himself with books and papers till dusk, when he rang for the lamp. The man took it in, and set it on the table by his master's side. Mr. Lauriston's whim was, as of old, to have a bright light shining on his book or desk, while the shadows were suffered to lurk in the corners of the great room. There he remained for hours undisturbed. When at last they went in, after repeated knockings, they found him in precisely the same place, and in almost the same attitude—dead. A pen was by his side, and there was a blank sheet of paper on the desk before him, just as the servant had seen it when he carried in the lamp. It was evident, however, that he had risen from his chair, for he had lighted the candles in the sconces right and left of the chimney-piece, so that the Arcadian picture was brilliantly illuminated. He had then returned to his place, confronting the beautiful shepherdess. So they were found, with the light shining on their two faces, and dying away into the surrounding gloom.

It might have been a trivial fancy under ordinary circumstances. Mr. Lauriston might have sat for an hour or so, gazing at the arch and radiant face which wore its unchanging smile for him, or for any one who chanced to raise his eyes to that "land of languid maying." Then he might have extinguished the lights, and let the curtain of darkness fall over the picture and his thoughts. But Death, stepping softly out of the shadows, had given that passing whim the strange significance of a last act, and with a cold, fantastic irony had set a final seal to that legend of inconsolable tenderness which had haunted Lauriston in life.

Rachel sat musing with her lips compressed. "You know that picture?" said Laura, anxious to make some safe remark which might touch, yet not too deeply probe, the subject which could not be ignored.

"No; I have only been inside the Hall once. Which room is it in?"

"The library. It hangs over the chimney-piece."

"No; I never went into the library. I have heard of the picture often, but I never saw it. I am glad he went home to it, since that was all he had, as you said."

"Yes; but I don't know," Laura answered doubtfully. "I may be wrong." It was a curious moment to choose for questioning her own belief in Adam's empty world and eternal regret, but the theory seemed to fail all at once in the presence of Rachel's sorrowful beauty. "I may be wrong," she repeated.

She was not prepared for the answer. "Oh, no!" her companion exclaimed in a quick, low voice. "You cannot be; you must not be. Oh, no! I am certain you are right!"

Nothing more was said before they reached the station. As the express rushed out of the smoky London haze into the freshness of the April fields, Miss Conway began to talk of blackthorn and violets, and the thin veil of the springing blades over the long brown furrows. It

was not a bright day. The sky was sunless, motionless, and grey, and though there was no wind the air was chilly. There was nothing of the golden gladness of spring, and yet there was the certainty that the sap was rising in stem and twig, and the cowslips pushing upward in the turf of the meadows. Rachel broke off once or twice to ask about the stations which they passed, and when Laura said, "The next will be ours," she became suddenly silent, and sat gazing at the level grey-green fields, where the sheep were feeding in an absorbed and business-like fashion. It was a pleasant rustic picture, but Rachel dimly saw a shepherdess driving "pink-ribboned flocks through a pink-flowered grove," instead of these actual homely fields. When they alighted she went to the fly from the "Falcon," meekly following Mrs. Latham, who stopped to ask the man whether he was going to drive them by Raymond's End. "Which way is that?" said Rachel. "Does it take us past the Hall?"

"Not past the principal entrance, unless we went up to it," said Laura. "We drive along by the park, and past the little gate. Do you care which way we go?"

Miss Conway shook her head.

"It's the best road," said the other, hesitating, and then frankly finishing her sentence. "Adam always went that way; the other is all up and down."

"I know this way," Rachel said.

When they reached the little gate she leaned forward and flashed a quick glance up the leafless woodland. She tried to call up the slim, dark figure standing under the boughs, but failed. She could picture the scene by a conscious effort of memory, but the actual spot where he once awaited her was conspicuously empty. She threw herself back and sighed.

At the "Falcon" they found themselves eagerly expected, and a lad was at once forthcoming to carry a message to the Hall. The landlady was full of gossip about the Squire's death, the doctor's certificate, which had made an inquest unnecessary, and the arrangements for the funeral. Laura lingered in the little parlour to listen, till in an incredibly short time the messenger returned, out of breath, and looking backward over his shoulder as he ran. It was so evident that Mr. Lauriston Brett was at his heels that Laura hardly waited to be told that he was coming, before she went down the road to meet him. They returned together, walking more leisurely, and lingered in front of the inn.

"I don't know what she wants to speak to you about," Laura was saying, as they halted; "but you must go to her and hear."

Dick nodded, touching his shadowy moustache with lightly caressing finger-tips. "I say, does she feel it much—was she very much shocked when she heard of it?" he inquired.

"Yes," said Mrs. Latham; "at the first moment she was. But no one seeing her now would imagine it; she has been calm enough ever since. You needn't be afraid, Dick; I know you detest a scene, like all men."

"A scene, yes," Dick muttered under his breath; "but if it were a tragedy!" Aloud he said, "I'm not afraid. And if I can serve her in any way——"

"Yes; I know you will. I wonder a little what Adam was to her," said Mrs. Latham abruptly; "or rather what he might have been but for that unfortunate love and loss of his, and her trouble. That's the sad thing with Rachel—everything might have been, nothing is."

Dick turned his head away, looking at a thirsty horse which had just been led to the trough, under the swinging sign, where it stood sucking up the water in greedy haste. "Everything might have been," he repeated. "You can't say anything sadder than that!"

"Ah, but I don't say it for you, Dick, thank God! For you everything may be."

"Who knows?" said Dick, still intent on the poor creature which reluctantly withdrew its outstretched neck at the driver's summons. "I'm not so sure."

"May be, and will be," she answered in a lower voice, "if only Adam has given you the chance you have a right to expect."

Dick faced her with an impatient gesture. "Don't talk of that," he said. "I don't think my future is sealed up in his will. I dare say he has done fairly enough; but I have heard too much speculative talk about his money already. It isn't nice with the dead man lying there, and it's foolish because there's the boy."

"But if he died——"

"He won't," said Dick; "and if he did, I swear I think the fortune would escape us all, somehow. Polhill, and Jones, and my father, and all the rest of them have had their eyes fixed on it since they were boys, and it's neither nearer nor further to-day than it was then. Leave it alone, Laura; don't *you* begin to think about it!"

"Dick," said Laura, "if I thought about it, it was for you!"

"Good heavens!" the young fellow exclaimed, "do you think I didn't know that? Of course if you went fortune-hunting it would be for me, but that's just why you shouldn't."

"Well, I can't do anything if I would," she replied. "You needn't excite yourself."

"All right. But I'm standing talking here instead of doing what I came to do. Hadn't I better see Miss Conway?"

"We've got a sitting-room upstairs. They'll show you. I think I'll walk a little way down the lane; I shall see you before you go back, but I won't go up with you now." And Mrs. Latham strolled off in the direction of the Hall.

Mr. Lauriston Brett was ushered upstairs and announced. He found Miss Conway studying a little damp-spotted engraving of a celebrated racehorse which hung on the wall. There were two or three other works of art in the best sitting-room of the "Falcon," and literature was represented by a County Almanac, intent on the eclipses and movable

feasts of two years earlier, an old volume of the *Evangelical Magazine*, and the Life of the Rev. Samuel Proser, a Wesleyan minister of some local celebrity. The proportions of the room were by no means stately. The ceiling was so low that it became a very obtrusive feature, and the floor had curiously unexpected undulations, so that Dick went hurriedly downhill to shake hands with Miss Conway, and then followed her up a gentle incline to the fireplace. "Won't you sit down?" she said, as she took a grim horsehair-covered arm-chair.

"Thanks," Dick replied; but he stood with his elbow on the chimney-piece, waiting her pleasure, and looking at her earnestly, and almost timidly. Rachel in that little country parlour was incongruously beautiful, like a splendid jewel in a tarnished setting. Dick perceived this; but he was not aware that, as he leaned on the marble-painted chimney-piece, with his head very near the ceiling, he had himself a distinguished air of height and London elegance.

"I ought to ask you to forgive me," said Rachel, looking up at him, "for sending for you on a trivial matter. But I did not realise how trivial it was—how it must strike you—till I had travelled all these miles and was waiting for you here."

"It will not seem trivial to me. And you must remember that it is you who have had the journey. My walk was a mere nothing."

"But you must have so much to do."

"On the contrary, very little. At these times undertakers and such people take the direction of affairs. And, you see, the household at the Hall has been accustomed to go on for months together without the presence of a master."

"Laura showed me your letter—it haunts me," said Rachel abruptly. "I have been picturing the scene ever since."

"To tell you the truth," he answered, "I shut myself up in the library and lighted the candles to imagine it better, when everybody was in bed last night. It was rather ghastly." She said nothing, and after a moment's pause he went on. "He was right after all, you see. I don't know why it seemed so unlikely to me that he should die suddenly like that, but somehow I never expected it. Well, in one way it was merciful, perhaps. I know he did not like the thought of dying. And since this was so sudden he would escape all knowledge——"

"Doesn't it give you a moment?" Rachel asked, fixing her eyes on the young man's face. "Not one? For if it does, he would escape nothing. Other people might, but he was so quick always—he understood in an instant. Oh, don't think he escaped anything unless there wasn't even that!"

"I don't know, I'm sure," Dick answered doubtfully. "Perhaps the doctors could tell."

"Perhaps. And perhaps they couldn't."

Dick turned to the chimney-piece, and took up the earthenware effigy of a distinguished warrior. He gazed abstractedly at the hero's

pink and white countenance, at the brilliant blackness of his hair, moustache, and boots, examined the streaks of coppery gilding which indicated epaulettes and gold lace, and sighed as he put him down.

"Who went into the library first? Who found him?" Rachel asked.

"The butler. And then the housekeeper either heard or saw, and went into hysterics." The young fellow answered with a shrug of the shoulders—Lauriston's shrug of the shoulders which he had mimicked in sport, till now it came with an unconsciously grotesque effect, as if it were the dead man's own commentary on the details of his departure from the world. "I suppose she couldn't help it—it was her way of showing grief, but those hysterics seem to me so horribly out of place! They had quite a scene with her—I hate to think of it. It's very absurd, of course."

"No," said Rachel.

"One couldn't help thinking, if Lauriston had been there! Well, then, they sent for the doctor, and telegraphed to me the first thing in the morning."

"Isn't it very dreary, alone in that big house?"

"Alone?" Dick repeated the word with a certain bitter amusement. "Do you really suppose I'm alone? Where do you imagine the relations are, if not coming as fast as they can, from all points of the compass, to look after each other, and to ask if they can be of any use?"

"But what do they want?"

"Well, different things. Lauriston Jones wants to manage the estate till Will comes of age. Polhill thinks nothing would be so good for the boy as to be brought up in a clergyman's family—sound Church principles—in a healthy vicarage on the Cornish coast. The others want what they can get. But every one of them wants the whole thing all to himself if the boy dies. Why don't you ask me what I want, Miss Conway?"

Rachel, leaning back, looked at him, but did not speak.

"By Jove!" said Dick, flushing hotly, "I wish it might turn out that he'd left them their legacies, and not sixpence to me. Upon my soul I do! It would be confoundedly awkward afterwards, and I should regret it all my life; but at least I should be able to hold my head up, and scorn the whole lot of them to-day!"

"I hope he hasn't left you anything," she said.

He was a little disconcerted. "By Jove!" he said again, "that's very good of you."

"Well, you could do without it—you can work! And other people might—might help you."

"Don't propose to die and leave me something!" Dick exclaimed with a sudden laugh. "That really wouldn't mend the matter *much*!"

Rachel swerved suddenly from the subject. "I must tell you what I wanted," she said. "It is very foolish, but—do you remember a little gold ring he wore?"

"Yes," said Dick, with a flash of comprehension. "That was yours?"

"It has my name—my mother's name—Rachel Conway, engraved on it."

"And you want it?"

"No! no! I was afraid it might be returned to me. Will you see that it is buried with him, that nobody touches it? Say that he did not wish it to be touched. It is true, for I put it on his hand myself, and his last promise to me was that he would wear it till he came back to me. Now he never will come back, but I could not even think of him—everything would be utterly gone if I had the ring again. Can you do this for me?"

"Yes."

"I may rely on you?"

"Yes." Young Lauriston Brett had an awe-struck boyish look on his face as he repeated his assurance. "No one shall touch it."

She replied with a slight inclination of her head, as a queen might have accepted a vow of loyalty. After a moment she spoke rapidly, clasping her hands so as to touch, and, as it were, to emphasise Lauriston's black ring.

"He gave me this," she said, "and took mine, as a sign that we were friends. I could not keep both, and I cannot part with this. If our friendship is dead, I need his ring all the more to remind me that it once lived. If I did not prize it enough in life—and I did not!—I prize the remembrance now that it is all that I have left—all that I can ever have. He was the truest, the most patient, the most thoughtful——" She stopped short and turned her head away.

"I've been thinking about Lauriston a good deal since I came down," said Dick, fingering the edge of the chimney-piece.

"Oh, yes," she made answer in a low voice. "We can all think of him now. While he was alive he thought of us."

"You are hard on us all. We couldn't be always saying we were grateful."

"No. But if one had said it only once! I never did!"

There was a silence which Dick was the first to break. "I see now," he said. "Lauriston was right. We had a talk about this, he and I."

"About me?"

Dick hesitated. "Well, we didn't say so. About how a man should help a woman. I wanted the man to help her in his own way; Lauriston wanted him to help her in hers."

"Yes?"

"I thought he was cold," said Dick, "and I said so." Rachel's eyes still rested on his in mournful questioning, but a slight curve of her lip betrayed her scorn. "But now I suspect he wasn't, and I think he was right. There is something better, I suppose, than a man's own way."

"He thought so, at any rate."

Dick nodded and took a step towards her. "Miss Conway," he said, "I want to say something, and I may not have such a chance again. If

there were anything I could do for you—I'm not such a fool as to fancy for a minute I could fill his place—I know better than that! But if there ever should be anything that I could do? It is just possible, you know."

"It is quite possible," said Rachel, "for it seems to me that I have asked something of you already."

"Yes, but I don't mean just one thing. If you would remember that I should be ready always, would you? I don't know what to say, I don't know how to ask you. But if it were only just for the sake of my name—his name. No! that's absurd," said Dick. "There's young Adam Lauriston Jones at the Hall now might ask as much, or old Polhill." He turned away and walked quickly to the window.

"Mr. Lauriston Jones might not, nor Mr. Polhill either. No one else might ask as much, and I thank you with all my heart. But I will have no more covenants of friendship; they weigh too heavily."

"Why so?"

"I will not take where I cannot give. It is my destiny to be alone; I will not try to escape it any more."

"But I don't want you to give me more than you have already given."

"What is that?"

"What you gave Lauriston—the desire to serve you without any reward but that of knowing that I have served you."

"And I cannot promise you even that!" she exclaimed, stabbed with the memory of the tone in which *he* had said, "If for one day you had not been the worse for me!" Should Dick have the assurance which had been denied to him?

"No? Well, I don't suppose I could be of any use."

"It isn't that," said Rachel. "I think I would sooner ask you for help than anybody. But I won't give or take any more promises; you shall be free to say 'No,' if I do ask you." Then with a sudden change of tone, "Tell me about that picture. Is it very beautiful?"

"Very," said Dick.

"You could fancy yourself looking at it to the last, dying with your eyes on it? I must see it one of these days. I want to know what she was like. I can fancy him with the light shining on his face, but I can't see the picture, it is a blank; he looks at nothing."

"You must come and see it," said Dick, turning his back on the window, and looking at her. "It is very beautiful."

"It should be! Yes; I will see it. How he loved her!" she said.

"I found old Polhill standing in front of the fireplace about an hour ago, with his hands behind him and his beard slanted out, staring up at it. And even the boy Jones says it isn't bad—reminds him of an uncommonly jolly girl down in Wales, I believe. I say!" Dick exclaimed, "that's the worst of a picture, isn't it? There she hangs, and has hung for years, and smiles for Polhill as if she didn't know him from Lauriston!"

"Yes," said Rachel, "but it only looks like that. Mr. Lauriston knew what the smile meant, and Mr. Polhill doesn't."

"That's true. But when a picture has actually looked on death, it makes the smile seem strange somehow. A smile that never changes! Suppose the Hall were to be burnt, one fancies a last glimpse of a smile like that through the flames and the driving smoke."

"I don't mind that," Rachel said musingly. "When the fire was over and the next morning came, I think I should find her smile in the blue and white sky and the sunshine. But I know what would be ghastly. If she died miserably and remorsefully, and no one knew it, and she hung there smiling through all the years."

"Oh, I say!" cried Dick.

"She would come back and haunt the place," said Rachel, pursuing her fancy slowly, as if by the help of some delicate, finely-drawn clue. "And when one stood looking up at her smile, and thinking of her with it, there would be all the black bitterness, and misery, and helplessness close by, and one wouldn't understand why the air was so heavy and the smile so strange." Miss Conway stopped and looked at her companion. This was not Lauriston to whom she was speaking, Lauriston who found her instantly in the duskiest mazes of her thoughts; it was only young Lauriston Brett, trying hard to enter into her meaning. "What nonsense I am talking!" she said.

"No, I don't think so."

"But indeed I am. Hark! what is that? Rain?" A sharp sputter of drops on the little panes behind Dick had made him turn. "An April shower! Where is Laura?"

"Here she comes, hurrying up the lane."

"Oh, go down and fetch her in; go, please! She has no umbrella, and she had such a cold last week!" The young fellow ran down, as he would have run into the fire just then if Miss Conway had bidden him; but as he had no umbrella either, and Mrs. Latham was just gaining the shelter of the sanded entry, he was not of much practical use. They went up together, as soon as she had recovered her breath. The shower was over directly, but so was Dick's talk with Rachel; those few drops of April rain had ended it. He took his leave almost immediately afterwards; only saying to Laura, "Are you coming down on—on Wednesday?"

Laura shook her head. "Very well," said Dick; "I shall run up that evening, I think; I shan't be wanted here any more. If I do, I'll look in, and tell you about it; shall I?"

"Do; I shall be dying to hear," she answered in a low voice.

He turned quickly to Rachel, colouring a little. He did not know whether she had caught Laura's meaning, or whether it was mere chance that made her say, as she gave him her hand, "Good-bye, Mr. Brett, and I may wish you—nothing?"

He coloured more deeply still. "Yes, you may, for I *do* mean it! But don't wish too hard, for what I should do I don't know!"

Laura looked after him as he went off. There was a gleam of light

in the April heaven, and he vanished between the shining wet hedges of the lane, with his head held high. He was proud of Rachel's last speech, and proud that she had uttered no word to remind him of the service she had asked of him. It would have pained him if she had thought he could forget.

He might be content, for her reliance on him was complete. When Wednesday came she was calmly sure that she should see her ring no more, that it was hidden in the darkness with Adam Lauriston, her name with him in death as in life. She showed no sign of agitation or grief, only a dim and curious absorption. Laura was careful to have the blinds drawn down, so that the front of the house looked sightless and vacant as a mask. Behind it Rachel rested in the deep crimson-covered chair, in which she sat that afternoon when she had her last talk with him. A book lay open on her knee. The whole air seemed slowly throbbing with a knell, and before her eyes the winding road through Redlands Park to which he had pointed once, "My funeral will pass that way one of these days," lengthened and lengthened interminably, blotted by the creeping procession. She saw all the solemn and laboured blackness of such an occasion, ending suddenly in a blank, when, with the closing of the vault above his head, the common air and light would rush into the space in the outer world which he had occupied, effacing him. She simply suffered these perceptions to lie heavily in her mind. They were not on the surface, she hardly looked at them. Any activity of grief would have been unsuited to Mr. Lauriston's memory; it would have jarred like a discord. One should acquiesce, since the spectacle of a small creature struggling against the decrees of unchangeable fate could only be pathetic through its absurdity.

Laura, however, though she glanced at the clock, and was better informed than Rachel as to the undertaker's arrangements, felt her cousin not dead, but for that one last day imperiously alive. What would he do for Dick? According to the answer the feeling which drove her to wander to and fro in feverish suspense, would harden to cold antagonism, or soften to kindly regret. She counted the hours till Dick could come with the news. Over and over again she reckoned the thousands which might well accumulate during the boy's long minority, and her dreams of a fortune for Dick grew and glittered like soap-bubbles. Over and over again she tried to bring herself back to sober probabilities, but could never see them uncoloured by her hope. Adam, before his boy was born, had made much of his cousin, so that young Lauriston Brett might be held to have a prior claim, not, of course, to the great inheritance—Laura was not unreasonable—but to an ample provision. If Lauriston had recognised that, he was welcome to cut off the Polhills, and Joneses, and Laura herself, with or without a shilling. Of course he could not provide for everybody.

Dick could not come till the evening, when his cousin's impatience was intensified. It is always harder to be patient when one is cut off

from the outer world, and enclosed in a shuttered and curtained room. "Thank God!" said Laura at the sound of his arrival.

He came up the room, looking slim and pale in his black. Rachel had said that he would not care, and indeed he had no very deep affection for the dead man. But he felt the importance of Adam's death: it was as if he came from a royal funeral.

"Well?" said Laura eagerly.

He took her hand, pressed it, and turned to greet Rachel. "Everything went off all right," he said. "It did not rain till after it was all over. The church was crowded. Of course there were no end of carriages;" and he began to enumerate the great people of the neighbourhood who had paid their tribute of respect to Mr. Lauriston.

Laura fidgeted. Rachel, looking downward, smiled in melancholy scorn, and Dick stopped short.

"Was the will read?" Mrs. Latham asked.

"Yes; when we got back to the Hall," said Dick, as if she might suppose the hungry pack had torn it open in the churchyard.

"Well," she urged him, "what has he left you?"

He looked at the fire. "He has left me five thousand pounds," he said reluctantly.

Laura uttered an exclamation, sharply accented, though it was hardly above a whisper. It was the lowest sum that she had thought of as a possibility. "No more?" she questioned. She felt that Adam had been guilty of an eternal injustice, and now was powerless. "It isn't enough," she said; "you can't live on that."

"No," said Dick, "I don't mean to live on it. But why should I live on Lauriston?"

"It seems to me that you had a right to expect——"

"No, I hadn't. You are very kind; but, believe me, it's best as it is. He has given me plenty to start with, and I ought to do the rest. It seems to me that a man may take that from his elders—education, you know, a start in life—I don't see that that degrades him if he does the rest. I'm only afraid Lauriston has left me too much."

Rachel had thrown herself back in her chair, and was absently fingering her ring. Young Brett looked appealingly at her, and she smiled sweetly and faintly in return, and then suffered her eyelids to droop again.

"Well, if you are satisfied," said Laura bitterly, "I confess I am not. I had hoped—— What has he done for the others?"

"He has left you a thousand pounds."

"That's very kind of him," she answered coldly. "And the Joneses, and all of them?"

"He has forgotten nobody who had any right to be remembered, I think," said Dick. "And everybody is discontented and angry."

"The boy has the bulk of the property, of course?"

"Of course," Dick nodded. "He has not forgotten you," he said, turning to Rachel.

“What do you mean?”

“He has made you Will’s guardian, if you will undertake the charge.”

She sat up suddenly, with an eager light shining in her eyes. “Are you in earnest?”

“Why, I shouldn’t joke about a thing like that,” said Dick. “He has, indeed. I’m a sort of guardian, too; I suppose that’s in case you don’t want to be bothered. But you are to settle everything just as you please.”

Rachel rose, and stood for a moment gazing in the direction of the door, as if her thoughts were following some one who had newly gone out and closed it. “He has left me something to do for him, he has trusted me with his boy,” she said, half to herself. It sounded to Dick like a soft cry of wonder and tenderness, out of the shadows in which she had been lost.

To Laura, too moodily intent on Dick’s poverty to profess interest in any other clause of Adam’s will, there came a sudden idea. “Dick!” she exclaimed, “what becomes of it all if the boy should die before he is twenty-one?”

“Oh!” said he, colouring, and fairly hanging his head, as if he were ashamed of the avowal, “if the boy died, I should come in.”

“You would? You would have Redlands? Everything?”

“Don’t! Yes, I should have every halfpenny. Think how they all hate me!” said the young fellow hurriedly. “And quite right too. I stand in everybody’s way—a poor beggar who can help nobody. I’ve robbed them all of their dreams; I oughtn’t to be able to look them in the face!”

“You would have it all,” said Laura again, “if the boy died!” She looked at him with dilating eyes. She was too good at heart to wish the little fellow any harm; but the splendid possibility was like a golden light about Dick as he stood there. Moved by a quick impulse he turned from her to Rachel. She, too, was looking at him, drawing slightly backward; but she did not speak.

CHAPTER XVII.

NEWS OF THE RUTHERFORDS.

THE Misses Henrietta and Eliza Lauriston lived in a substantial red brick house about a mile from Aldermere. The Grove, as it was called, had a neatly gravelled drive up to the front door, a sprinkling of small trees about it, and an air of respectability and well-preserved age. The flower garden would have suggested many epithets rather than “flowery;” it was restrained and neat, as if it were always carefully dressed for the gardener, and in the height of summer it displayed the newest varieties of

geraniums and foliage plants. At no season were there any traces of neglect; it was always weeded, raked, and rolled. The kitchen garden was prosperous and full.

Rachel noted something of this as she drove up to the door, about three weeks after Mr. Lauriston's funeral. Nothing would satisfy her but that she should go herself to fetch little William, nor would she allow Mrs. Latham to accompany her. "You are a Lauriston," she said; "perhaps you will remind him of his father, or of Mr. Brett—he is fond of Mr. Brett—and he would not come to me. I want him to get used to me first. If you go, I shall not have a chance."

"I think you will have a chance," said Laura.

There had been an interchange of letters between Miss Conway and Miss Eliza Lauriston. The sisters disapproved of Adam's arrangement with regard to the boy. They felt that they might appear somewhat slighted in the eyes of their acquaintances; and, besides, they were not satisfied with what they heard of Miss Conway's views. They feared she was worldly, and that Will's soul would be endangered. Still, it was a comfort that she was a lady of good position, and, they believed, of good family. They uttered no complaint, but expressed a dignified readiness to give up the child. They had undertaken the charge at their brother's particular wish, Miss Eliza wrote, and at his wish they resigned it. Since he had not considered what their feelings might be, she would not allude to them. Miss Conway would find the train which left Liverpool Street at 11.5, and arrived at Aldermere at 1.9, a very convenient one, as they invariably lunched at 1.30. The carriage should be waiting for her.

This programme had been carefully carried out; and Rachel was ushered into the dining-room, where the cloth was already laid. Miss Eliza Lauriston came forward and introduced herself. In one colossal sentence she alluded to the loss they had so recently sustained; hoped Miss Conway was well; explained rather discursively that they were in the habit of sitting in the dining-room till after luncheon, when the drawing-room fire was lighted; and apologised for Miss Henrietta's absence. She was obliged, it appeared, to keep her room that day—"one of her old attacks," said Miss Eliza, as if the nature of Miss Lauriston's old attacks was too universally known to need explanation. Rachel said that she was very sorry, and Miss Eliza passed on to a few particulars concerning the age and social standing of their medical man. Her conversation, though discursive, was not airy; she wandered ponderously. Presently she begged to be excused for a few minutes, that she might see how her sister was before they sat down to luncheon.

Rachel, left alone, looked round the room. It gave a general impression of flock paper and well-rubbed mahogany. Well-rubbed mahogany reveals the character as well as the circumstances of a household, and she felt that it suited Miss Eliza. She was probably like her mother. At any rate, her solidly built and rather clumsily-featured personality

showed no trace whatever of the type which Rachel had been accustomed to associate with the name of Lauriston. What would Will be like?

She turned eagerly when the door opened, but it only admitted a preternaturally solemn page. His livery was dark, and a dignified self-restraint had been shown in adorning it with buttons. He put some plates on the table, made up the fire, and went out again. Rachel listened vainly for the sound of childish feet. No one came till Miss Eliza returned, and announced that her sister was a little better. It seemed that some negligence on the part of Miss Lauriston's maid had brought on the attack, which led naturally to a discourse on servants. Miss Eliza could not think what the world would come to. "I do assure you," she said impressively, "there is not a woman servant in the house on whom I can really rely. They are all full of giddy fancies, and utterly wanting in proper respect. I could not recommend you to take William's nurse—a most flighty and foolish young woman; I gave her warning three weeks ago. And yet I dare say you will have a difficulty in finding a better; I really think we have had twenty different nurses since the child came here. But, still, as I told you when I wrote, I could not advise you to have Emma; I believe the girl thinks of nothing but the ribbons outside her empty head. Have you engaged one?"

Rachel had.

"Well, perhaps you may be more fortunate; I hope you will be. We have an invaluable man-servant," said Miss Eliza. "Higgins has been with us for years, and we trust him implicitly. But just because he is so devoted to us, and so thoroughly respectable, the other servants never get on with him. There would be endless complaints if I would allow them; but about that I am firm. If you once begin that kind of thing, there is no end to it, is there?"

Rachel supposed not.

"No, indeed," said the elder lady decidedly. "Higgins may wish that I should listen to their foolish stories—that he should court inquiry is natural enough—but I will not. I always say to him, 'No, Higgins; I have something better to do than to listen to such nonsense. I shall *not* do it, however much you ask me.' And he always *does* ask me—there is nothing underhand about Higgins."

Rachel appeared interested in Higgins, but found no opportunity of speech.

"And Joseph," Miss Eliza continued; "I must say that I think we have secured a treasure in Joseph—the page. Henrietta is very much pleased with Joseph; she thinks he shows unusual seriousness and reliability. That comes of taking a boy of respectable connections. He is related to Higgins. But Higgins would not have anything to do with engaging him; he left it entirely to us; he feared people might say he had influenced us. Nothing could be more untrue; but he felt it so strongly that he wished to dissuade us from trying him. He even said he would do his best to train another boy he mentioned—a stupid lad;

I'm sure he would have found him dreadfully tiresome, and not a good character either. But I settled it at once; and now when I say, 'Well, Higgins, my plan hasn't turned out so badly, has it?' he is obliged to say, 'No, ma'am, it certainly hasn't.' He is very honest about it."

Rachel tried to utter a word or two of congratulation, and looked vaguely at the carpet. She had come to Lauriston's sister, with her heart full of the thought of Lauriston and his dead love, to claim his child, and she was met point-blank with a panegyric on Higgins. She felt as if the air about her was heavy and grey, but she knew it was not Higgins's fault, and hardly Miss Lauriston's. People cannot help such things.

At that moment the door opened softly, and Rachel, raising her eyes a little way, encountered a child's face. "This is Will—little Will!" she exclaimed, starting up, and feeling absurdly shy.

"Yes," said Miss Lauriston. "Come and speak to this lady, William."

He came forward and shook hands. Rachel coloured, could not detain the little fingers which slipped out of her clasp, looked at him with eager, wistful eyes, and wondered what to say. "I am very glad to see you," she hazarded.

Will turned from her to his aunt. "Emma was packing my Noah's Ark," he said, "and she has broken the elephant. They don't all go in very easily, and she was in a hurry, and she jammed Noah's wife in, and broke its trunk right off. Wasn't she a stupid?"

"Very careless of Emma," said Miss Lauriston. "She might have known that the ark should be packed in proper time."

Rachel had often wondered what Will would be like, and a dim picture of the little, crippled lad had gradually formed itself in her mind, almost in spite of anything she had heard—a small, gentle figure, with dainty waxen features, and Lauriston's eyes shining out of melancholy shadows. The timid little vision faded away in an instant. Will was pale, no doubt, but he was a beautiful boy, with softly rounded face and limbs, golden brown hair curling in little wanton rings about his forehead, delicately curved brows, and long lashes which rested on a cheek like a white roseleaf. His eyes were almost too quick and shrewd for a child; in default of a better word you might have called them sly, provided always you smiled as you said it. The little rosy lips, not quite so deeply coloured as they should have been, hinted at mutinous possibilities as well as kisses. Will was like a little captive Cupid, fretting and drooping a little under irksome restraint, pale for lack of sunshine and liberty, clothed in heavy black, and taught how to behave, but Cupid still and unsubdued. Even the limping gait with which he crossed the room did not so much suggest deformity or pain, as the cut wing which should hinder his escape.

Luncheon seemed an interminable meal to Rachel. The invaluable Higgins waited; the solemn page went noiselessly in and out; Cupid,

with a dinner napkin tucked under his chin, because his pinafores were packed, ate his food in silence; and Miss Eliza talked of the arrangements which she had been making, in conjunction with the bishop's wife, for a sale of work in aid of a charitable institution. Rachel, while she listened to the account of a previous failure, when a previous bishop's wife omitted to ask Miss Eliza's advice, stole occasional glances at little Will. Once, when he was reproved for splashing himself with gravy, he looked at her, as if to ascertain her opinion of his crime. "Don't look at Miss Conway," said his aunt; "I am sure she is quite shocked to see you in such a state." And Rachel and Will, both much abashed, fixed their eyes upon their plates.

At last, however, just as they had finished, there came a ring at the bell, and an announcement that Mrs. Marchmont was in the drawing-room. Miss Eliza begged to be excused for a few minutes, and departed to receive her visitor. Rachel looked across the room at Will. "Won't you come to me?" she said.

He came nonchalantly, and let her take him on his lap, but evidently waited for her to begin the conversation. "Did you ever have a bow and arrows?" she said abruptly. The Cupid fancy suggested the question, and it did as well as anything else, but as soon as the words were uttered Rachel wondered what Higgins would think of her.

"Once," said Will, "last year, when I was a little boy. But Aunt Eliza took 'em away."

"How was that? I'm afraid you did some mischief with them."

Will looked over his shoulder, and saw that Higgins was folding the cloth, and must hear his answer. "They said I shot the postman," he replied. "But if I did, it was because I was very little then. I shouldn't shoot him now."

"Oh, no, I hope not!" said Rachel, and touched his bright hair with her lips.

Will waited till Higgins was gone, and then he said eagerly, "Will you give me a bow and arrows? I want one, and a gun. Papa said you were coming; he said you were kind. Will you?"

"We must see about it," said Rachel.

"Did you like papa?" Will continued.

"Very much."

"He was worldly," said Will. "Aunt Henrietta said so. Didn't you know he was worldly?"

"He was very good to me always."

"Yes," said Will; "he gave you his ring. Aunt Eliza said so before dinner, when she went to see Aunt Henrietta. Aunt Henrietta's got one of her attacks. Why did he give it to you? I should like it."

"Not now," said Rachel, closing her hand. As she felt the warm little fingers, trying to draw off the token of Adam Lauriston's promise, she thought of his dead hand with her ring on it. Will desisted all at once, and looked up into her face.

"Are highwaymen worldly?" he asked.

"Highwaymen? Well, yes. I should say they were. But what do you know about highwaymen?"

"Oh, I know!" and Will nodded as he released her hand. "Joseph tells me. Do you know Joseph?"

"Is he the page?"

"Yes. Aunt Henrietta hears him his catechism, and the book he learns it out of in the pantry has got highwaymen in it. He doesn't say it out of that," Will explained; "he says it out of Aunt Henrietta's book. But sometimes he tells me a lot. Highwaymen have guns and pistols and masks, and they have black horses; always black, I think, like Black Bess; and they take people's money and things, and ride away—quick! Do you know all about highwaymen?"

"I have read a little about them, not much," Rachel answered modestly.

"Joseph will tell you," said the boy, his eyes shining with eagerness. "You come to the pantry when he's cleaning the plate, and he'll tell you. I think he's going to be a highwayman, and I want to be one when I'm big, and go with Joseph. Do you think I can be one?" said Will. "If I'm good and always take my medicine, do you think my foot will be strong so that I can be a highwayman?"

"We'll try and make you as strong as we can," said Rachel. "And then we shall see what you want to do."

"Let's go to the pantry now, before Aunt Eliza comes back!" the boy exclaimed. "Joseph is there, I know, and I dare say he will tell us some stories. Sometimes I sit on the dresser and he dances about. He can dance over the poker and tongs."

"No, no, we can't go now," said Rachel hurriedly. "Will, shall you like to come and be my little boy?"

"Is it pretty there?"

"It's in London. There are a great many sights, you know. And in the summer time we will go to the seaside, or into the country where it's very pretty."

"It will soon be summer," said Will. "Are there many missionaries where you live?"

Quick as thought Miss Conway determined to pay a colonial bishop's expenses home, and let him plead his cause in her drawing-room if Will liked it. It was so much safer than guns and bows and arrows. "Are you very fond of missionaries?" she asked.

He looked suspiciously at her. "Yes," he said in a rather hesitating tone. "But the black people want them most."

"Of course they do. Well, suppose we send them some money?"

"Yes," said Will. "Some of your money," he added more doubtfully.

"Oh, yes, some of my money. We'll put it in a letter and send it to them, shall we?"

"You needn't put it in a letter," said Will, with the scorn of superior knowledge; "you can put it in a missionary box. I put some of my money in a missionary box once. It's just like a money-box, only it doesn't ever come out."

Rachel was agreeing to the missionary box, when Miss Eliza opened the door, ordered Will upstairs, and asked her to go into the drawing-room. She followed her hostess, only partially catching what the latter was saying about her friend Mrs. Marchmont. Miss Eliza ushered her in, and a tall old lady started out of an easy chair. "It is Edgar Conway's daughter!" she exclaimed.

Rachel stopped short, looking blankly at her. Mrs. Marchmont was brown and wrinkled, her black hair was touched with grey, her eyes were eager and bright. She held out her thin hands.

"Yes," said Rachel, recovering herself, "my father's name was Edgar, and I'm like him, I know. You knew him, then?"

"Knew him! Knew him when he was a baby! I was his god-mother." She whisked round to Miss Eliza. "It's all right, you see, just as I said. What were you saying about being obliged to see after the little boy before he left? Don't let me keep you if you want to go. I must have a little talk with Miss Conway. You and I will have our gossip later; I'm going to stay if you will give me some dinner. It's only the old people who have time to talk everything over by the fire-side; the young folks must be flying off in a hurry. You're going almost directly, I suppose?" she said to Rachel.

"In about three-quarters of an hour, I believe."

"To catch the train at ten minutes past four," said Miss Eliza gravely. "Yes; and since you say you will excuse me, I think I *will* go and make sure that William is got ready a little while before the carriage comes round."

Mrs. Marchmont, having effected this cool dismissal, looked over her shoulder and nodded affably at the door which closed behind Miss Eliza. "That's all right," she said. "Two's company and three's none. Now we'll have a little chat about old times." She drew Rachel to the sofa. "But, bless me!" she exclaimed, "you haven't got any old times yet!"

"Haven't I? I think perhaps I have," said Rachel. The old times which weighed so heavily upon her soul, and were part of her destiny, though they lay beyond the limits of her actual life, rose up around her like a gloomy wall, shutting out the sunlight. She straightened herself and compressed her lips.

"You are a Rutherford!" said the old lady. "So was Edgar, as like his mother as possible. It does me good to see you. One goes on and on—people talk of life's being short, but I'm sure it seems long enough when one thinks that one has done nothing but live, live, live, day after day, year after year, getting up and going to bed, ever since one was a baby—one goes on and on till the old times—no, the young times, the young times," she repeated, with a tender softening of her rapid speech,

"seem almost like a dream. When nobody remembers about them but oneself, it is hard to tell what is fancy and what isn't."

"That's true," said Rachel.

"But the old times came back in flesh and blood when you walked into the room just now—a Rutherford every inch of you! And your voice, too!" Rachel thought that the voluble old lady had not given herself much opportunity of judging it. Hers was not the wandering and all-embracing talk of Miss Eliza Lauriston, but a rush of pent-up words. "You have just Hester's voice—your grandmother's voice—and you carry your head in the same way."

Rachel contrived to use the Rutherford voice sufficiently to say: "You knew all my people then, not only my father?" She wondered as she spoke, claiming them as her kindred, how it was that she did not feel the old sensation of creeping horror at the thought of the Rutherfords.

Mrs. Marchmont's eyes, which were fixed on her with a greedy intentness, as if to catch every detail of the family likeness, brightened with quick pleasure. "Yes," she said; "I was only a girl then, but I knew them all—Hester and John, Agatha, Paul, and poor George who died young. Dear! dear! to think that they should all have gone so long ago, and left me to talk of them—only me!"

"It isn't so very long since Mrs. Elliott died," said Rachel. "Only five years last summer."

"Mrs. Elliott! *Phæbe Elliott!* Don't talk to me of Phæbe Elliott!" and the old lady fairly stamped her foot in a frenzy of mysterious but unmistakable anger. "Five years ago, was it? Yes; I dare say. Very likely; I dare say."

It was evident that she scorned the date of Mrs. Elliott's death. It almost sounded as if she felt aggrieved that it should be so recent as five years earlier, and would have preferred a gulf of two or three centuries. Rachel hardly knew how to take this outburst of wrath. Was she bound to defend the unknown great-aunt who had left her a fortune? "I don't understand what I've said that I oughtn't to say," she began. "I know very little about Mrs. Elliott, but surely she was a Rutherford too? And I never heard why she should not be mentioned."

"No; I suppose not. Yes; of course she was a Rutherford, and I dare say a great many people would rather mention her than any of the others. I wouldn't, as it happens; but then I'm nobody."

"I wish you would tell me what you mean," said Rachel. "I know so little——"

"Well," said Mrs. Marchmont sharply; "I suppose you know what they say of those Rutherfords? You must know that!"

"That they were—mad," Rachel answered, hardly above a whisper. "It was true, wasn't it?"

"Oh, I suppose so; as true as such sayings are. All I know is, that I don't find any sane people to compare with them now."

The younger woman leaned slightly towards her, with a light

shining in her beautiful eyes. "You loved them," she said softly, in a meditative voice. "I never thought anybody loved them. Tell me about them, please."

"What am I to tell you? What do you want to know?" said the old lady, between laughter and tears. "You to sit there with your Rutherford face—you might be Hester come back again—and say you never thought anybody loved them! She was the eldest; I remember her wedding-day; I was a girl just in my teens. Five-and-fifty years ago, and I can remember the very look of the sky that morning, and the roses I fastened in my frock, and the sun shining on the wheat as we drove the field way to church, and the people crowding in to see Miss Rutherford married to her cousin, Major Conway. If you could have seen them! But that wasn't exactly possible," said Mrs. Marchmont, with a quick little laugh. "And Paul Rutherford handing everybody out, with a word for every one, the handsomest man there, and the brightest."

"Was he the eldest son?"

"No; John was the eldest. He was tall and dark, clever, but very silent. I used to be a little afraid of John Rutherford when I was a child."

"I saw Miss Agatha once when I was little," said Rachel with an effort, "and she frightened me. Her eyes were so strange, and I thought she was going to catch hold of me and keep me—I was quite a child, you know. You were fond of my grandmother, but did you care for Miss Agatha?"

"Oh!" said Mrs. Marchmont, with a passionate intonation, "I loved Agatha! I dream of her sometimes, and when I wake my eyes are full of tears. She was so good. So many years she waited for Matthew Elliott; helped him, prayed for him, was true to him, and then he married Phœbe after all. Well, Phœbe was younger and fresher; she had never troubled herself about any one; she was just so much pink and white selfishness. But Agatha's whole life had turned to him, and when he failed her she couldn't believe it; she went out of her mind. She used to talk about Matthew; she fancied that she had been married to him, and that he was dead. The Elliotts didn't like it, and they locked her up. If John Rutherford or Paul had been alive, they wouldn't have allowed it; they would have killed him first, I think. But there was no one left but Phœbe; your grandmother was dead too. And I was away—we were in India then—she died before I came back. Oh, my poor Agatha!" Mrs. Marchmont ended with a sob, and groped for Rachel's hand, turning her head away. "And you were afraid of her, were you? Oh, she would never have hurt you, she was always so fond of children. I remember your mother, a bit of a child, about the house after Agatha."

"I wish I had known!" said Rachel brokenly, looking back with yearning tenderness to the lonely woman who had loved children. "But my mother never knew I was frightened. I am very sorry! And now

I can't do anything, it all comes too late. Oh, but I wish I had known, even a month ago!"

"Why?"

Rachel sighed. "There was some one then who would have liked to hear."

Mrs. Marchmont looked at her, but was absorbed in old memories. "Thank Heaven!" she said, with curious devoutness, "Phœbe had no children. She was lonely, lonely as she made Agatha. And Matthew Elliott was no better than she deserved, a weak fool who needed a noble woman to keep him straight. Well, they are dead and gone; I'll say no more about them." She paused. "Do you know I came over on purpose to see you? They talked of a Miss Rachel Conway, and I knew your mother's name was Rachel, if you were Edgar's child. And they said you would not marry because there was madness in the family——"

Rachel raised her head proudly and gravely.

"Perhaps you are right; I don't say you are not," Mrs. Marchmont went on. "People talk of those things differently nowadays. We thought of it as the visitation of God; you want to put everything under a microscope, and find it all out. You must decide for yourself, of course——"

"I think Fate decided for me," said Rachel.

"Well," said the old lady, "you will outlast me. I shall like to think there is one of my Rutherfords left as long as I live, and then if they must end they will end well."

"They will end with me, and I hope with all my heart they may end well. The sons never married, then?"

Mrs. Marchmont made a little negative sign. "George died quite young. He *was* very peculiar; he did no harm, but he certainly wasn't like other people."

"And the others?" Rachel questioned.

The old lady hesitated. "John was out with his gun one day, and he shot himself; some people said it wasn't by accident. I don't know. It was within a week of his wedding-day. Nobody knew anything about the woman he was going to marry; he met her somewhere abroad, and I believe he proposed to her at the end of three days. But people began to say very queer things about her just before the wedding. I suppose he heard of them, I can't tell. He simply worshipped her, but he was the proudest man I ever knew. Of course it might be that the stories were false; you see there was this accident, and she went away, and the whole thing died out. I shan't tell you her name. Perhaps he was troubled and unhappy, and so was careless."

Rachel listened thoughtfully. John, Hester, Agatha, George. "And had Paul a story?" she said.

"Not worth telling," Mrs. Marchmont answered hastily. "He caught a chill, it was commonplace enough. Nothing that anybody would call worth remembering so many years after. Tell me about

yourself," she went on, with a sudden change of tone. "You have come for the little Lauriston boy?"

"Yes," said Rachel. "I'm his guardian, you know."

"You knew his father well? I never saw him, but I have heard his sisters talk about him—the man who married a perfectly beautiful wife, lost her within the year, and was heartbroken ever after. Is that so?"

"She died when Will was born," said Rachel. "I didn't know Mr. Lauriston till afterwards, but they say she was exceedingly beautiful."

"And was he such a mirror of inconsolable constancy?"

"Everybody says so. I hope so."

"Well, you may understand your friend's ways, but if you will allow me to speak quite frankly—an old woman should have that privilege, I think—there is a kind of sentiment about the story, as I have heard it, which I don't appreciate. Don't be offended, I may be misinformed. But, candidly, I don't admire the love which is so concentrated on a woman that it cannot endure her child's presence, and leaves the poor little motherless fellow to the care of a couple of old maids, like our good friends here. Give me a more commonplace and wholesome affection. But, as I say, you may understand your friend——"

"I don't know that I understand him," Rachel replied proudly; "but he *was* my friend!" Her great, clear eyes suddenly lighted up as she spoke.

"Well, that's enough," said Mrs. Marchmont. "Make a man of his boy for him; you can't do better than that. These good women would soon have turned your William into an accomplished little hypocrite; he watches them out of the corner of his eye, I've seen the little rogue. Take him away, spoil him as little as you can; but love him, that's what he wants."

"I shall love him. I've no one else to love," said Rachel.

The old lady looked at her, sighed a quick little sigh, and then smiled wistfully. "I wish you belonged to me, my dear! I should love you for your own sake, as well as for their sakes who are gone. Ah! here come Miss Eliza and the little man. Well, we have had our talk, Miss Conway and I, and it has been a great treat to me. I'm not quite sure whether I felt fifty years younger or fifty years older while it lasted, but either way it was a change, and that's something, for one does get tired of one's age sometimes. And so you are going away, William? Listen to me; you must make Miss Conway play with you. She didn't play as much as she ought to have done when she was a little girl, on purpose to have her play-time with you now."

"No; I didn't play much," said Rachel, with a glance and smile at the old lady. "You will have to teach me, Will."

"You shall have a bow and arrows too," said Will; and then recollected himself and looked guiltily at his aunt.

"Oh, no, William; not bows and arrows!" she exclaimed. "Remember the postman."

"Not bows and arrows, unless Will and I can find some nice safe place where postmen never come, eh, Will?" said Rachel.

Miss Eliza said nothing, but she shook her head as if England were too small and too densely populated for Will's deadly archery to be permitted. The crunching of the gravel under the carriage wheels was heard, and Miss Conway hurried to put on her bonnet. "My sister told me to apologise for her," said Miss Eliza. "She is so sorry not to have been able to see you to-day. But one of her attacks, you know!" Rachel expressed a responsive regret, and they came down into the hall, where Higgins was looking on while the gardener lifted Will's boxes. Mrs. Marchmont stood at the drawing-room door. Rachel went up to her, and held out both her hands. "Good-bye," she said, "and—and—kiss me, please." The old lady kissed her; and Rachel, looking at her through a burning mist of tears, felt as if she had kissed Miss Agatha. "I hope we shall meet again," she said. Yet, even as she said it, it struck her that the essential thing was that they should have met that once.

Will meanwhile kissed his aunt, and said, "Good-bye, Higgins," with much equanimity. He had to be reminded of his farewells to Mrs. Marchmont and the gardener, and a message to his Aunt Henrietta was extracted from him with considerable difficulty. But he suddenly ran back and kissed Joseph tenderly, and whispered something in his ear.

"Oh, William!" exclaimed his Aunt Eliza, "don't you know that it's very rude to whisper in company?" She spoke impressively, as if whispering were a joy reserved for the most remote and utter solitude. "You should set Joseph a better example of manners."

Will loosed his hold, and Joseph stood erect and sorrowfully virtuous. Rachel slipped something into his hand, which almost startled him into a change of expression, and as he put a shawl into the carriage she contrived to say, "Don't you think you might find something better to read about than robbers, Joseph?" But Joseph said, "Robbers 'm?" with such an innocently inquiring expression that she was ashamed of herself, and felt relieved when they drove off.

Will looked out of the window till they turned into the road. Then he settled himself on the seat by Rachel, and said cheerfully, "We will have those bows and arrows, won't we? Aunt Eliza needn't know, and I was a *very* little boy when I shot that postman."



"THAT'S A VERY LITTLE SPADE."

W. S. ...

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Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER XVIII.

DICK'S PROMISE.



MR. LAURISTON BRETT came in one evening, about a week after Will's arrival. He found his cousin Laura alone, trying over a new song. She turned on the music-stool to greet him. "Dick, you look tired," she said. "And you haven't been here for an age."

"I have been busy." He threw himself into an easy chair. "Is Miss Conway out?"

"No; baby-worshipping upstairs."

"Oh, the boy!" said Dick. "Of course. I

forgot him for the moment."

Mrs. Latham touched a few airy notes. "You to say that when Rachel comes down," she announced, "We are going to the sea."

"I would not recommend After another bar or two,

"Where?"

"I don't know." She continued her music. "Scenery not so much an object as absence of precipices. Sands absolutely necessary, as we take spades and little wooden pails."

"When do you go?" said Dick, clasping his hands behind his head.

"Next week, if we can find suitable lodgings at a suitable place. Will is pale." She emphasised the statement with a solemn chord. "So are you," she said, without any accompaniment. "Can't you get away from town for a bit, and come to us in our exile?"

"I don't know whether I could afford a spade," said Dick, doubtfully. "I'll think about it."

"Don't wait for Rachel to invite you," said Laura, still lightly musical. "She might forget."

"You don't like the small boy?"

"On the contrary," Laura replied; "he is rather a nice small boy. His revelations concerning those two old cats, his aunts, are truly delightful, and he has his father's taste for music. Young Oswald brought his violin a day or two since, and Will was enraptured."

"You do like him, then?" said Dick. "That's all right."

"Yes," in a doubtful tone. "But he hinders things rather, and I don't particularly care to go, at a week's notice, to a flat place by the seaside, because Will doesn't eat his breakfast. Rachel proposed that I should remain here, but I don't like breaking up the household in that fashion. However, if they go on to Redlands, I think I shall leave them and pay a round of visits. I can't stand Redlands this summer. Of course there would be no going out."

"Are they going to Redlands?"

"Yes; I believe so. Rachel thinks the boy ought to spend part of every year there. She wants him to learn to love his father's home."

"I should like to see the little man," said Dick, unclasping his hands. "I'm glad she is so fond of him."

"Oh, if that was your desire, it is amply gratified."

"My desire?" he repeated.

"Yes. Didn't you put it into Rachel's head to talk to Adam about him? I consider you responsible for all this."

"Well, that's all right, isn't it?"

"Oh, certainly. Virtue is its own reward," said Laura enigmatically. But after a moment she changed her tone. "Oh Dick, I wish you had a tenth part of the money that Rachel and Will have! Then you needn't work so hard."

"But I haven't," said Dick. "Their money is nothing to me. Don't you think my own will be better—when I make it?" He spoke quickly, as if to banish an importunate idea, and, springing up, began to turn over a pile of music. "Here are some of my songs," he said; "you haven't played for me for weeks." And he set one up in front of her.

From one they went on to another. Dick had just finished "Hybrias the Cretan," in his biggest voice, when the door opened and Miss Conway came in. He hastened to greet her, and in the same breath assured her that she had missed a treat.

"What, your song? Oh, no; I heard it all. I was waiting just outside."

Dick looked doubtful. "Is that a compliment or not? It speaks well for the power of my voice; but still, that you should prefer me modified by a door——"

Rachel smiled, turning aside to the fireplace.

"I was afraid such a burst of melody might wake Will. No, no you haven't done any harm," she said, in answer to his look of dismay.

"We were talking about him." And Dick came from the piano. "I want to see him. I must come some day; you know we are old friends, Will and I."

"Yes; I know. You were the first person who ever really told me about him." She hesitated a moment. "Would you like to come and see him now?"

"May I?"

"Yes; if you won't sing 'Hybrias the Cretan' over him!"

Dick followed her out of the room and up the stairs, past a great moonlit window where masses of white cloud drifted by like ghostly ships. Miss Conway paused for an instant at a door, turned the handle softly, and ushered him in. There were soft white curtains, a shaded light, something of warmth and sweetness in the air, and in his dainty nest lay Will asleep, with a small hand half-closed upon the coverlet. Dick felt as if he had come to some sacred secret shrine, and held his breath, looking down at the delicate cheek and long lashes. Rachel put back a lock of hair which had strayed across the boy's forehead, and Dick, seeing that he was not disturbed by her touch, stooped down and laid his lips softly on the little hand.

"A week yesterday since he came," said Miss Conway, "but it seems to me as if it must be more. Isn't he beautiful?"

"Yes," Dick answered in a whisper.

"Is he like that picture at Redlands?"

He nodded. "Only the picture is rather fairer."

Rachel sighed. "If I may but keep him!"

He looked up in surprise. "Keep him? Who's going to take him away? Lauriston has made that safe enough; nobody will upset his will, you may be very sure of that."

"Yes; but suppose he were to die!"

The young fellow drew his breath sharply. But in a moment he recovered himself. "But why should he? I don't see why he should. A good many children live, you know. I've seen them about!" He whispered his whimsical consolation with the utmost discretion, and Rachel answered with a smile.

At that moment the nurse appeared at the open door, and asked a question of her young mistress, who went, with a word of excuse, to speak to her in the passage. Dick, looking round, saw an open book lying on a chair beside him, and took it up. It was a volume of French poetry, and on its flyleaf was pencilled, "Adam Lauriston." Dick turned the leaves as he stood, and read bits here and there. Old legends lived in those pages, strange shapes fitted across them, they held the wild cries of beasts and of hurrying winds, and the stormy rush of rain. There were tropical flowers, and the foam of wintry seas, and the fierce loneliness of deserts under the arching heavens. There were visions of ruined worlds, of suns and wandering stars, and a human voice ringing strangely and drearily in void places, telling of regret, of agony, of defiance, of endurance. It was a curious transition to turn from all these immensities and eternities to the warm, hushed room, and Will's little head upon the pillow.

Rachel came back and stood on the further side of the bed. "Ah!" she said, with grave calmness, glancing at the book in Dick's hand, "did you see whose that was? He brought it to me almost the last time he was here; it was a favourite book of his."

"I saw his name in it," said young Brett. She looked down at the boy, and he gazed at her, a tall slight figure against the white curtain folds, bending her head a little with tender intentness. For the poet there might be the infinite space of night and thought around them; but for Rachel there was nothing beyond that little bed, and the breath that came and went so softly on those childish lips. She smiled a little at first, and then her thoughts swung back to the point they had quitted a little while before, and she looked up and met the young man's eyes.

"If ever you have Redlands——" she began.

He started and drew back. "You'll hate me! God grant I mayn't!"

"Hate you!" she repeated softly; "no; I should have no right to hate you. But I would never see you again—I could not bear it—I would go to the other end of the world to avoid you. Hate you—no! It would not be your fault. I would pray that you might be happy—very happy—and that I might die like the boy!"

"God help me!" Dick answered. "I don't want Redlands. If you could look into my heart, you would know that this is true." He hardly spoke above a whisper; but Will stirred a little on his pillow, as if some breath of the intenser life above his head, with its passionate utterances and its foreshadowings of possible sorrow, ruffled his sweet tranquillity. Rachel paused with a hand slightly lifted, and the little sleeper sank back into repose. It was she who broke the silence.

"Dick," she said, with her eyes fixed on the child, "you told me that day at the 'Falcon' that if at any time I wanted help——"

"I'm ready," said Dick, his prompt fervour carefully conveyed in a subdued voice. "What can I do?"

"You can give me exactly what I refused that day—a promise."

"What is it?"

"Your cousin made me a promise once, but the time to redeem it didn't come; I trust it never will come."

"So far as I can take his place——"

Still looking downward, she smiled and shook her head. "No, she said; "I don't want that promise renewed. I want you to make me a different one with little Will for witness. That is why I ask you here and now."

"Tell me," said Dick.

"You know what I am afraid of, what keeps me apart from every one. Everybody knows, don't they? And you talked about me with him."

"I know."

"Well, if ever I am mad—if you see the least sign of it—promise me that you will take Will away from me. You are his guardian, too, you know. If you have the smallest doubt you must do it. Get me locked up somewhere—shut up behind all the bolts and bars in the world. Never mind where, if only I can't get out. I might frighten the boy—you don't know what harm it does to frighten a child. Even if I loved him I might do it, and he might never know I loved him. Promise," she said in a voice which was all the more intense, because she never for one moment raised it above the soft level tone in which she had begun to speak over the unconscious child.

"Promise to take the boy away—to shut you up—nonsense!" said Dick. "Shut you up in—in—— Not I!"

"See here," she said quite calmly. "There's but one thing in the whole world that a man could do to give me any happiness, and that is to make me this promise, so that I may live my life in peace. And you are the one man I can ask to do it. And I do ask you!"

"Oh, for God's sake don't talk like that! And I couldn't if I would!"

"Oh, yes, you could. I'm sure you could. They always say it's only too easy to get anybody into a madhouse——"

"You in a madhouse! Oh, God!"

"I don't believe there'll be any need. If I did I should doubt my right to have Will now. But if there should be, I must know that at the first hint of danger I may trust to you to save the boy without a thought of me."

He was silent, gazing at her.

Suddenly her eyes lighted up. "Promise!" she said. "Your hand upon it, Dick! You *shall*!"

Their cold hands met and clasped across little Will, who was far away in some small paradise of dreams. "You are bound," said Rachel, as her fingers relaxed their hold.

Dick, with a groan, turned away his head, and stole softly out of the

room. But the moment he was out of hearing he ran downstairs, and went straight out of the house into the moonlit night. Rachel, lingering, with a contented smile, drew the sheet about the little sleeper's throat, and stooped to pick up the book which young Brett had let fall. She looked at the flyleaf with its pencilled name. "Take *your* place!" she said to herself. "No!"

CHAPTER XIX.

NEWS OF THE EASTWOODS.

RACHEL could laugh a little at her devotion to Will, which for that very reason was the more certainly unchangeable, since those who laugh at their own enthusiasms can hardly be laughed out of them. Her thoughts had fastened on the boy at first in idle curiosity; her desire to have him had been a whim, a fancy eager enough, yet which might have lighted elsewhere. Mr. Lauriston had understood her when he smiled and shrugged his shoulders, and said, "If it amuses you!" With the tidings of her guardianship came a deeper sense of earnestness and responsibility, but still she was conscious of herself, and felt that Will belonged to her. But with Will's first look and touch came the revelation of his individuality. He could not be moulded to any fancy of hers. The boy, though delicate, was yet too healthy to be sentimental; he would not pose in becoming attitudes; he was shrewd and sharp-eyed, quick to take an advantage; he would not even consent to be petted, unless it happened to please him at the moment. He was affectionate; yet his very demonstrations of love were not tender, but had a spice of something piquant and salt in them. Over and over again, Rachel's first fancy of Cupid recurred to her, and she detected in Will the wayward hardness of the little, laughing god. He could not be her toy, and she loved him all the better for the certainty.

It was true that his first offer of affection had been prompt and spontaneous enough. As they came up to town from Aldermere, Will, after amusing himself in every possible way in the railway carriage, settled down in the seat opposite her, and looked at her obliquely, while feigning to be absorbed in the landscape. Presently he spoke.

"There was a housemaid once I used to love, only she went away last November. She went away on Guy Fawkes' Day. She wasn't my nurse, she was the housemaid. Should you like me to love you?"

Rachel, smiling, yet wistful, answered "Do."

Will, looking round, seemed suddenly struck with the fact that the present was an unoccupied time. "I'll love you now!" he exclaimed. And forthwith he flung himself upon her, threw his arms about her neck, and rained a shower of fierce, hard, little kisses on her face. The little, clinging arms wound closely round her throat, little lips kissing

hurriedly, little knees pounding her lap in eager restlessness, filled Rachel with a thousand new sensations. From that embrace she emerged, flushed, dishevelled, laughing, with her eyes full of loving gladness and a new hope in her heart. She felt as if she had been suffered to pour her life from off its bitter, turbid lees, into the golden cup of Will's future, and might throw the dregs away. As for Will himself, he scrambled back to his seat, and sat, out of breath, surveying the ruin he had wrought. His thoughts returned to the housemaid. "I loved her sometimes till her cap came right off," he said.

Mrs. Latham had foretold that Dick would receive no further invitation to join them at the seaside, and, when the event falsified her prediction, she laughingly declared that Rachel was afraid Will might be dull without company. In truth, however, Miss Conway was eager to show her gratitude to Dick for the promise she had exacted from him, and to put their friendship once more on its old footing of frankness and ease. The young fellow discovered that his work would permit him to take a few days' holiday, and he made his appearance at Salthaven as soon as they were comfortably settled.

The watering-place which Rachel had finally selected was flat, undoubtedly. Mrs. Latham, with perfect good humour, sat indoors with her back to the window, writing sprightly descriptions of its flatness to her numerous correspondents. Outside there was a pearly clearness, a grey gleaming sky, and a silver tide flowing softly over wide reaches of wet brown sand. A jetty ran out from the shore, the sharp skeleton outlines of its black timbers softened at the seaward end with weeds of olive and green, which rose and fell upon the waves. There were tarred boats resting idly on the beach, and fishermen disentangling long ropes of brown nets. Looking towards the land, the green meadows rose in a hardly perceptible slope from the road which marked the termination of the sands, which at their highest line were seldom covered, and were overgrown with grey sea holly and yellow poppies. The crescents and terraces of the watering-place clustered about a pretentious little spire, but, further inland, windmills caught the gleaming light on their labouring sails, and a grey church-tower and the stacks and roof of a distant farm rose against the sky.

The lodging-house keepers considered the season hardly begun, but already there was a sprinkling of visitors on the jetty and parade, and a baby corps of sappers and miners on the sands. Will, in rough blue serge, and with white feet bare, a busy little speck on the wide brown expanse, fortified the shore against the tide, which at that particular moment was ebbing peacefully in the distance. Rachel, a few yards higher up, where the sand was drier, read her book or gazed dreamily seaward "over the level floor of the flood," and was conscious of the active little limping figure all the time.

After a little while, however, Will ceased his solitary toil, his attention being attracted by a gentleman who had appeared near Miss Conway

with a tiny, two-year-old, pink and white little maid clinging to his hand. The gentleman tucked his stick and his penny paper under his arm, and with his disengaged hand began to dig for his daughter's diversion. Her spade, however, was hardly bigger than a good-sized spoon, and Will, standing by with an air of superiority, could not restrain his contempt for such an implement. "That's a very little spade," he said half to himself.

"So it is," said the gentleman, lifting a handsome good-humoured face, a little burnt by the sun, and flushed with stooping. "Suppose you lend me yours for a minute."

The boy, somewhat taken by surprise, hesitated as he resigned it, but his new friend took it mechanically, gazing beyond him. His colour deepened suddenly. Rachel had risen and was looking at him with startled eyes.

It was an embarrassing moment, as moments are apt to be when customs and codes of manners fail, and feelings are confused. They were not enemies—it was absurd to suppose it—but might they meet as friends? Eastwood's glance questioned Rachel, Rachel's questioned Eastwood. They had parted, in grief on her side too hopelessly sad for tears, and on his side in a passion of jealous anger which could only have been quenched in blood. Nothing had come of it all except that they met thus, five years later, in charge of small children on the sands, with no deeper feelings than a bashful goodwill, and a rather awkward remembrance.

Eastwood dropped Will's spade and went forward, lifting his hat. "How do you do?" he said, taking the hand which Rachel held out to him. "I didn't know you were staying here."

"We came four days ago," she replied. "It seems a nice place, I think."

"Oh, very nice, very nice indeed," said Charley with a hurried readiness of assent. "Very dull, though," he added, recollecting himself. "Nothing on earth to do."

"And how are all your people?" Rachel inquired, tripping up his last word with the question, as if a moment's delay might be attended with fatal consequences.

"Oh, they're very well, thank you. That is, my mother isn't quite as young as she used to be, you know. And Bessy wasn't quite the thing, that's why we came down here; but she's better for the change, I hope."

"I'm very glad to hear it." By this time the two had contrived to look at each other. Charley's impression, based partly on her shyness, was that Rachel was very little changed. Rachel was struck with the fact that Charley was handsomer than she expected to see him, with a kind of solid regularity of feature. There was more flesh than of old; he was sleek, prosperous, well-fed, well-brushed, healthy, kindly, and self-satisfied, and yet at the same time he had the keen look of a man of business. He was a capital specimen of the type; but Rachel felt as if she

had seen a great many of him. A curious sense of dreariness stole over her soul, and saddened sea and sky. It was impossible to believe in that early love, impossible to believe even in the pain of that hour of parting. Rachel was lonely with that uttermost loneliness when the past wears an alien face. She looked at Charley's smiling lips, and remembered that he had kissed her in the garden long ago. Instinctively she drew back a little—as if it were possible to withdraw from contact with a memory!

The next moment she was asking him questions about his little girl, with a desire to atone for the feeling of repulsion which she had not been able to overcome. Eastwood could not suspect it. To him a bygone kiss was simply a bygone kiss, one among many, to be recalled vaguely with a broadening smile, as one might recall summer days or glasses of good wine. He stooped with a pleasant look in his eyes to arrange little Muriel's pink silk handkerchief, and with a large forefinger touched the baby cheeks above it, pink, too, like the little bindweed blossoms that grow in the corn. "Time goes fast, doesn't it?" he said, looking admiringly downward. "Will Muriel kiss the lady?" But Muriel declined to make friends, even when lifted to the safe eminence of dada's arms. She repulsed Rachel with tiny hands, in spite of his tender reproaches, "Oh, Muriel! Naughty—naughty!" Muriel only laughed, and put a little cotton-gloved finger in his mouth, till Eastwood, with a hurried "Excuse me—I'll be back in a minute," strode across the sands, and handed her over to the nurse who was in charge of her baby brother.

Returning with a smile on his face, and his fair beard glistening in a pale gleam of sunshine, he encountered Will, who was just setting off to resume his digging. Charley laid his hands on the boy's shoulders. "And who may this little man be?" he asked in his strong, mellow voice. But even as he said the words Will looked up at him with a swift glance, and a slight arching of his dark, delicate brows. "By Jove!" said Eastwood, "it's Lauriston's boy!"

"Yes," said Rachel. "He lives with me, don't you, Will?"

Will nodded. "But when I'm a man I shall have my papa's big house to live in," he explained.

"Of course you will," said Charley. "And a very nice house it is. But that won't be just yet, you know."

"It won't be so very long," Will replied. "I'm bigger than I used to be. And when I'm grown up," he went on with a confident expectation of sympathy which he had learned from Rachel, "I shall be a highwayman. I shan't ever be a missionary—I like highwaymen best, don't you?"

"This is moral!" said Charley. "Well, between you and me, my boy, I don't like either of 'em. I like the people who put money into my pockets, not the folks who come with a plate or a pistol to take it out."

"I won't take yours," Will assured him. "I won't ever take yours. But I shall be a highwayman and have a black horse."

"And the police after you. I wouldn't," said Eastwood. "They'll make a magistrate of you one of these days. The magistrate has the best of it. You should always mind and get hold of the right end of the stick."

Will looked doubtfully at him, and then went back to his fortifications, reserving a few questions concerning the habits and privileges of magistrates for Rachel's ear on some future occasion.

"Nice little fellow, but queer, isn't he?" said Charley, looking after him. "Takes after his father in that. I saw poor Lauriston's death in the papers. Terribly sudden, but I suppose he knew it was likely to be sudden, poor fellow."

"Yes," said Rachel hurriedly. That Charley should stand there talking about Adam Lauriston was unendurable. "Tell me about your sisters, she exclaimed abruptly. "They are both married, are they not?"

"Both—yes. Fanny's done very well for herself, very well indeed. Pemberton is the sort of man to make his way. He'll be keeping his carriage one of these days, and it won't be so very long first, I tell him."

"And Effie?"

"Well, Effie's made rather a mess of it, I'm afraid, poor girl!" Charley replied in a tone of genuine regret. "Not a bad sort of fellow—in an office he was, with a fair salary and the prospect of a rise. Used to do a bit of writing in the evenings, poetry, and that sort of thing. No harm in that, you know, after business hours."

"No, certainly not," said Rachel, entirely assenting to his liberal views.

"Had a little money of his own, though only a little. It was providential that he had, for he's blind now, poor fellow, and has had to give up his situation. They waited for him as long as they could, they thought so highly of him; but of course business is business, and a blind man's no good. They couldn't wait for ever."

"But is he hopelessly blind?"

"I'm afraid so. Effie won't believe it, but I doubt there's no chance."

"Then how do they live?"

"Well," said Charley, drawing lines on the sand with his stick, "there's that little of his own, and he writes a bit—at least Effie writes for him. They take his stories now and then in some magazine or other. And Fanny sends Effie things, sometimes. So does Bessy, and mother—we—we all do a little to help."

"I know *you* do," said Rachel, with so frank and eloquent a glance that it sent a ten-pound note that very evening to Effie. "She was always your favourite, wasn't she? Poor Effie! Give me her address, please; she will let me go and see her, won't she?"

"Oh, yes, she'll be delighted," said Charley. He had forgotten Effie's enthusiastic partisanship, and the pleading question seemed unnecessary. "And I should like you to see Fanny's house; it's really uncommonly nice. Maida Vale way she lives."

“And you?” said Rachel. “You are doing well; you are getting on?”

He nodded. “I’ve nothing to complain of. My business increases every year. I’ve a nice home, and I’ve got the best of wives.” (Charley said it with a certain defiance, and a consciousness that it would sound very well when he went home to Bessy, and described the interview with his former love.) “I don’t know what I could wish for more.”

“I’m very glad,” she murmured.

“They call me Lucky Eastwood, sometimes,” he went on. “And certainly I have had one or two curious bits of luck—things coming in my way that I couldn’t have expected. But I may say this—I’ve made the most of them. Chance is all very well; but the question is, I fancy, what use a man makes of his chances.”

Rachel assented.

“I wish you could have seen Bessy,” said Charley. “But, you see, we are leaving to-morrow morning, and she and Minnie (that’s her sister) are packing up. It’s a regular mess, you know, with the children’s things and all; I don’t like to ask you. They were glad to get rid of me, I know.”

Rachel promised to call on Mrs. Charles Eastwood at a more convenient season.

“You’re very little changed!” said Eastwood abruptly. He stood looking at her with old reminiscences waking in his glance. After all, mad though it was, she *had* meant what she had said. She had not married Lauriston. He believed now that she would never marry. She would have married him—Eastwood—if things had been different, poor girl! And, with all his fidelity to his incomparable Bessy, Charley felt himself the hero of a mournful romance, and looked very kindly at the heroine.

“Am I not changed? I feel changed,” said Rachel, laughing a little nervously, and again half inclined to step back.

At this moment Dick arrived, lounging across the sands from the water’s edge. He was dressed in light grey, which somehow seemed curiously different from Charley’s tourist suit, and he had no penny paper. His hands were full of shells and bits of pebble and weed. Rachel introduced him as Mr. Lauriston Brett, and he calmly pressed upon her three cockleshells, and a piece of wood covered with barnacles, that he might have one hand free. Eastwood was a little perplexed when the new-comer began to talk in his easy fashion. In Dick’s manner to Miss Conway there was a mixture of reverence and familiarity which the other could by no means understand.

“Why, what is Will doing?” said Rachel after a few minutes.

Dick, who was halfway through a sentence, went away to look, and, returning, announced placidly that Will was trying to cut up a starfish.

“To cut up a starfish! Oh, go and stop him! How cruel of him! How cruel of you to let him!”

Dick shrugged his shoulders. "I don't think he can manage it," he said as he moved off. "And very likely it's dead. And, anyhow, how can you expect a six-year-old imagination to enter into the feelings of a starfish when it's being cut up with a wooden spade?"

Returning again he brought information that the starfish was certainly dead. "In fact," said Dick, "the—the news is a trifle stale. Will is going to bury it in a grave lined with red seaweed."

Eastwood was asking Rachel where she lodged. He received a slight but unmistakable shock of unexpectedness when she named Sea View House, the best lodgings in the place. He had not yet fitted Rachel in his mind to her changed surroundings. "We are at No. 2, Marine Villas, the turning after you pass the church," he said. "Nice little houses. Our names are in the Visitors' List—you didn't notice them?"

"I don't often look at a Visitors' List," Miss Conway replied. "If I do find any people I should like to see, they always went away last week and left their names lingering behind them."

"Well, I like to read the list through; one never knows who may be there." And Charley pulled a little badly-printed paper out of his pocket. "Look," he said, unfolding the *Salthaven Advertiser*, "there we are." And there sure enough were "Mr. and Mrs. Charles Eastwood and family, and Miss Watson." Dick looked over his shoulder as he pointed.

"But you didn't find us, you see," said Rachel. "Though, to be sure, I didn't send our names, so perhaps it wasn't likely."

"I should have thought the people of the house would put them in. Sea View House—hullo! 'Mrs. and Master Latham, and Miss Conroy.' I suppose that means you?"

"Well, I call that very good for a Visitors' List," Rachel persisted. "Oh, *now* what is Will doing? Is he quarrelling with that small boy?"

Dick departed again, and the other two looked after him. "A relation of Lauriston's, I suppose, by his name?" said Eastwood.

"A cousin," she answered. The small boy fled at Dick's approach, Will was detained, there was a prolonged discussion, and finally Will went towards the water, evidently seeking something, while Dick stood like a pensive sentinel, immovably fixed, and gazing out to sea.

"The boy isn't so very lame after all," said Charley, watching the little figure with its slight unevenness of gait. "This is a capital place for children, certainly; but I must say for my part I like something a little livelier. What did you do with yourself the day before yesterday, when it poured, off and on, the whole afternoon? I thought I should have yawned the top of my head off, by Jove!"

"Oh, but it was such a beautiful afternoon," Rachel replied abstractedly, following Will with her eyes. "There were such lovely gleams of sunlight on the sea between the storms. I sat by the window

and watched them. I saw a whole rainbow and three bits, and the clouds were so fine!"

Eastwood surveyed her with compassionate amazement. "You are not a bit changed—not a bit. I can fancy you looking at the sea all day. 'What are the wild waves saying?'—that's the sort of thing you like, eh? So does Minnie; she was quoting it only this morning. I should think you'd get on with Minnie—I never saw such a girl for poetry. But that isn't my line, you know." And Charley smiled, feeling that his yawns proved him something of a martyr, suffering for the possession of superior common sense. "I dare say it's all very beautiful; but I must own I like something livelier." And with that he looked at the time, found it later than he expected, and rather hurriedly took his leave, with a beaming expression of his hope that they might meet before long in town.

Young Brett strolled back almost immediately. "That small boy was a marauder," he said. "While Will was digging the grave he came and stole the starfish, and when he was charged with the theft he declared that he picked it up over there." Dick pointed to the ocean generally. "It was a lie, I know, but I didn't pursue him to tell him so. It wasn't my business to look after his morals; I suppose he has a nursemaid or somebody to do that. I suggested to Will that I would take care of the grave, while he went and looked up something else in the way of a corpse. He came back, quite happy, with some miscellaneous remains of crab, so now the funeral is going on."

Rachel smiled. "You are very good to Will."

"Am I? I say, that man's name was Eastwood?"

"Yes."

"An accountant?"

"Yes. Why?"

"Oh, nothing," said Dick. "Only he's a man Lauriston knew something of, isn't he? I remember hearing him speak of him."

A sense of loyalty and justice to Charley, a feeling that for the sake of old times she must defend him even from a dead man's scorn, prompted Rachel's reply. "Yes, that's the man," she said. "But—but you must make some allowance—Mr. Lauriston was inclined to be a little hard on Mr. Eastwood—you see the two were so unlike that they never could really understand each other. If you only knew it, there is really a great deal of good——"

"But that isn't the man, then!" said Dick amazed. "I meant an Eastwood he was interested in. He took a good deal of pains to put some business in his hands once or twice. I happened to be with him at the time."

The colour rushed to Rachel's cheeks and her eyes filled. "Oh!" she said, "shall I never know him—never be just to him?" She caught one hand with the other, and pressed it almost as if it were not her own. "Dick, that is the man!"

Miss Edgeworth.

PART II.

LATER TIMES.

VIII.

“CALAIS after a rough passage; Brussels, flat country, tiled houses, trees and ditches, the window shutters turned out to the street; fish-wives’ legs, Dunkirk, and the people looking like wooden toys set in motion; Bruges and its mingled spires, shipping, and windmills.” These notes of travel read as if Miss Edgeworth had been writing down only yesterday a pleasant list of the things which are to be seen two hours off, to-day no less plainly than a century ago. She jots it all down from her corner in the post-chaise, where she is propped up with a father, brother, stepmother, and sister for travelling companions, and a new book to beguile the way. She is charmed with her new book. It is the story of *Mademoiselle de Clermont*, by Madame de Genlis, which is just out. The Edgeworths (with many other English people) rejoiced in the long-looked-for millennium, which had been signed only the previous autumn, and they now came abroad to bask in the sunshine of the Continent, which had been so long denied to our mist-bound islanders. We hear of the enthusiastic and somewhat premature joy with which this peace was received by all ranks of people. Not only did the English rush over to France; foreigners crossed to England, and one of them, an old friend of Mr. Edgeworth’s, reached Edgeworthstown, and filled its enterprising master with a desire to see those places and things once more which he heard described. Mr. Edgeworth was anxious also to show his young wife the treasures in the Louvre, and to help her to develop her taste for art. He had had many troubles of late, lost friends and children by death and by marriage. One can imagine that the change must have been welcome to them all. Besides Maria and Lovell, his eldest son, he took with him a lovely young girl, Charlotte Edgeworth, a daughter of Elizabeth Sneyd. They travelled by Belgium, stopping on their way at Bruges, at Ghent, and visiting pictures and churches along the road, as travellers still like to do. Mrs. Edgeworth was, as we have said, the artistic member of the party. We do not know what modern rhapsodists would say to Miss Edgeworth’s very subdued criticisms and descriptions of feeling on this occasion. “It is extremely agreeable to me,” she writes, “to see paintings with those who have excellent taste and no affectation.” And this remark might perhaps be thought even more to the point now than in the pre-æsthetic age in which it was

innocently made. The travellers are finally landed in Paris in a magnificent hotel in a fine square, "formerly Place Louis-Quinze, afterwards Place de la Révolution, now Place de la Concorde." And Place de la Concorde it remains, wars and revolutions notwithstanding, whether lighted by the flames of the desperate Commune or by the peaceful sunsets which stream their evening glory across the blood-stained stones.

The Edgeworths did not come as strangers to Paris; they brought letters and introductions with them, and bygone associations and friendships which had only now to be resumed. The well-known Abbé Morellet, their old acquaintance, "answered for them," says Miss Edgeworth, and besides all this Mr. Edgeworth's name was well known in scientific circles. Bréguet, Montgolfier, and others all made him welcome. Lord Henry Petty, as Maria's friend Lord Lansdowne was then called, was in Paris, and Rogers the poet, and Kosciusko, cured of his wounds. For the first time they now made the acquaintance of M. Dumont, a lifelong friend and correspondent. There were many others—the Delesserts, of the French Protestant faction, Madame Suard, to whom the romantic Thomas Day had paid court some thirty years before, and Madame Campan, and Madame Récamier, and Madame de Rémusat, and Madame de Houdetot, now seventy-two years of age, but Rousseau's Julie still, and Camille Jordan, and the Chevalier Edelerantz, from the Court of the King of Sweden.

The names alone of the Edgeworths' entertainers represent a delightful and interesting section of the history of the time. One can imagine that besides all these pleasant and talkative persons the Faubourg Saint-Germain itself threw open its great swinging doors to the relations of the Abbé Edgeworth who risked his life to stand by his master upon the scaffold and to speak those noble warm-hearted words, the last that Louis ever heard. One can picture the family party as it must have appeared with its pleasant British looks—the agreeable "ruddy-faced" father, the gentle Mrs. Edgeworth, who is somewhere described by her stepdaughter as so orderly, so clean, so freshly dressed, and the child of fifteen, only too beautiful and delicately lovely, and last of all Maria herself, the nice little unassuming, Jeannie Deans-looking body Lord Byron described, small, homely, perhaps, but with her gift of French, of charming intercourse, her fresh laurels of authorship (for *Belinda* was lately published), her bright animation, her cultivated mind and power of interesting all those in her company, to say nothing of her own kindling interest in every one and everything round about her.

Her keen delights and vivid descriptions of all these new things, faces, voices, ideas, are all to be read in some long and most charming letters to Ireland, which also contain the account of a most eventful crisis which this Paris journey brought about. The letter is dated March 1803, and it concludes as follows:—

Here, my dear aunt, I was interrupted in a manner that will surprise you as much as it surprised me—by the coming of M. Edelerantz, a Swedish gentleman whom we

have mentioned to you, of superior understanding and mild manners. He came to offer me his hand and heart! My heart, you may suppose, cannot return his attachment, for I have seen but very little of him, and have not had time to have formed any judgment except that I think nothing could tempt me to leave my own dear friends and my own country to live in Sweden.

Maria Edgeworth was now about thirty years of age, at a time of life when people are apt to realise perhaps almost more deeply than in early youth the influence of feeling, its importance, and strange power over events. Hitherto there are no records in her memoirs of any sentimental episodes, but it does not follow that a young lady has not had her own phase of experience because she does not write it out at length to her various aunts and correspondents. Miss Edgeworth was not a sentimental person. She was warmly devoted to her own family, and she seems to have had a strong idea of her own want of beauty; perhaps her admiration for her lovely young sisters may have caused this feeling to be exaggerated by her. But no romantic, lovely heroine could have inspired a deeper or more touching admiration than this one which M. Edelerantz felt for his English friend; the mild and superior Swede seems to have been thoroughly in earnest.

So indeed was Miss Edgeworth, but she was not carried away by the natural impulse of the moment. She realised the many difficulties and dangers of the unknown; she looked to the future; she turned to her own home, and with an affection all the more felt because of the trial to which it was now exposed. The many lessons of self-control and self-restraint which she had learnt returned with instinctive force. Sometimes it happens that people miss what is perhaps the best for the sake of the next best, and we see convenience and old habit and expediency, and a hundred small and insignificant circumstances, gathering like some avalanche to divide hearts that might give and receive very much from each. But sentiment is not the only thing in life. Other duties, ties, and realities there are; and it is difficult to judge for others in such matters. Sincerity of heart and truth to themselves are pretty sure in the end to lead people in the right direction for their own and for other people's happiness. Only, in the experience of many women there is the danger that fixed ideas, and other people's opinion, and the force of custom may limit lives which might have been complete in greater things, though perhaps less perfect in the lesser. People in the abstract are sincere enough in wishing fulness of experience and of happiness to those dearest and nearest to them; but we are only human beings, and when the time comes and the horrible necessity for parting approaches, our courage goes, our hearts fail, and we think we are preaching reason and good sense while it is only a most natural instinct which leads us to cling to that to which we are used and to those we love.

Mr. Edgeworth did not attempt to influence Maria. Mrs. Edgeworth evidently had some misgivings, and certainly much sympathy for the Chevalier and for her friend and stepdaughter. She says:—

Maria was mistaken as to her own feelings. She refused M. Edelcrantz, but she felt much more for him than esteem and admiration; she was extremely in love with him. Mr. Edgeworth left her to decide for herself; but she saw too plainly what it would be to us to lose her and what she would feel at parting with us. She decided rightly for her own future happiness and for that of her family, but she suffered much at the time and long afterwards. While we were at Paris I remember that in a shop, where Charlotte and I were making purchases, Maria sat apart absorbed in thought, and so deep in reverie that when her father came in and stood opposite to her she did not see him till he spoke to her, when she started and burst into tears. . . . I do not think she repented of her refusal or regretted her decision. She was well aware that she could not have made M. Edelcrantz happy, that she would not have suited his position at the Court of Stockholm, and that her want of beauty might have diminished his attachment. It was perhaps better she should think so, for it calmed her mind; but from what I saw of M. Edelcrantz I think he was a man capable of really valuing her. I believe he was much attached to her, and deeply mortified at her refusal. He continued to reside in Sweden after the abdication of his master, and was always distinguished for his high character and great abilities. He never married. He was except for his very fine eyes, remarkably plain.

So ends the romance of the romancer. There are, however, many happinesses in life, as there are many troubles.

Mrs. Edgeworth tells us that after her stepdaughter's return to Edgeworthtown she occupied herself with various literary works, correcting some of her former MSS. for the press, and writing *Madame de Fleury*, *Emilie de Coulanges*, and *Leonora*. But the high-flown and romantic style did suit her gift, and she wrote best when her genuine interest and unaffected glances shone with bright understanding sympathy upon her immediate surroundings. When we are told that *Leonora* was written in the style the Chevalier Edelcrantz preferred, and that the idea of what he would think of it was present to Maria in every page, we begin to realise that for us at all events it was a most fortunate thing that she decided as she did. It would have been a loss indeed to the world if this kindling and delightful spirit of hers had been choked by the polite thorns, fictions, and platitudes of an artificial, courtly life and by the well-ordered narrowness of a limited standard. She never heard what the Chevalier thought of the book; she never knew that he ever read it even. It is a satisfaction to hear that he married no one else, and while she sat writing and not forgetting in the pleasant library at home, one can imagine the romantic Chevalier in his distant Court faithful to the sudden and romantic devotion by which he is now remembered. Romantic and chivalrous friendship seems to belong to his country and to his countrymen.

IX.

There are one or two other episodes less sentimental than this one recorded of this visit to Paris, not the least interesting of these being the account given of a call upon Madame de Genlis. The younger author from her own standpoint having resolutely turned away from the voice of

the charmer for the sake of that which she is convinced to be duty and good sense, now somewhat sternly takes the measure of her elder sister, who has failed in the struggle, who is alone and friendless, and who has made her fate.

The story is too long to quote at full length. An isolated page without its setting loses very much; the previous description of the darkness and uncertainty through which Maria and her father go wandering, and asking their way in vain, adds immensely to the sense of the gloom and isolation which hides the close of a long and brilliant career. At last the travellers compel a reluctant porter to show them the staircase in the Arsenal, where Madame de Genlis is living, and to point out the door before he goes off with the light.

They wait in darkness for the door to be opened.

After ringing this bell we presently heard doors open and little footsteps approaching nigh. The door was opened by a girl of about Honora's size, holding an ill set-up, wavering candle in her hand, the light of which fell full upon her face and figure. Her face was remarkably intelligent—dark sparkling eyes, dark hair curled in the most fashionable long corkscrew ringlets over her eyes and cheeks. She parted the ringlets to take a full view of us. The dress of her figure by no means suited the head and elegance of her attitude. What her nether weeds might be we could not distinctly see, but they seemed a coarse short petticoat like what Molly Bristow's children would wear. After surveying us and hearing our name was Edgeworth she smiled graciously and bid us follow her, saying, "Maman est chez elle." She led the way with the grace of a young lady who has been taught to dance across two antechambers, miserable-looking; but, miserable or not, no home in Paris can be without them. The girl, or young lady, for we were still in doubt which to think her, led into a small room in which the candles were so well screened by a green tin screen that we could scarcely distinguish the tall form of a lady in black who rose from her chair by the fireside; as the door opened a great puff of smoke came from the huge fireplace at the same moment. She came forward, and we made our way towards her as well as we could through a confusion of tables, chairs, and work-baskets, china, writing-desks and inkstands, and birdcages, and a harp. She did not speak, and as her back was now turned to both fire and candle I could not see her face or anything but the outline of her form and her attitude. Her form was the remains of a fine form, her attitude that of a woman used to a better drawing-room.

I being foremost, and she silent, was compelled to speak to the figure in darkness. "Madame de Genlis nous a fait l'honneur de nous mander qu'elle voulait bien nous permettre de lui rendre visite," said I, or words to that effect, to which she replied by taking my hand and saying something in which "charmée" was the most intelligible word. While she spoke she looked over my shoulder at my father, whose bow, I presume, told her he was a gentleman, for she spoke to him immediately as if she wished to please and seated us in *fauteuils* near the fire.

I then had a full view of her face—figure very thin and melancholy dark eyes, long sallow cheeks, compressed thin lips, two or three black ringlets on a high forehead, a cap that Mrs. Grier might wear—altogether an appearance of fallen fortunes, worn-out health, and excessive but guarded irritability. To me there was nothing of that engaging, captivating manner which I had been taught to expect. She seemed to me to be alive only to literary quarrels and jealousies. The muscles of her face as she spoke, or as my father spoke to her, quickly and too easily expressed hatred and anger. . . . She is now, you know, *dévoté acharnée*. . . . Madame de Genlis seems to have been so much used to being attacked that she has defence and apologies ready

prepared. She spoke of Madame de Staël's *Delphine* with detestation. . . . Forgive me, my dear Aunt Mary; you begged me to see her with favourable eyes, and I went, after seeing her *Rosière de Salency*, with the most favourable disposition, but I could not like her. . . . And from time to time I saw, or thought I saw, through the gloom of her countenance a gleam of coquetry. But my father judges of her much more favourably than I do. She evidently took pains to please him, and *he says he is sure she is a person over whose mind he could gain great ascendancy.*

The "young and gay philosopher" at fifty is not unchanged since we knew him first. Maria adds a postscript:—

I had almost forgotten to tell you that the little girl who showed us in is a girl whom she is educating. "Elle m'appelle maman, mais elle n'est pas ma fille." The manner in which this little girl spoke to Madame de Genlis and looked at her appeared to me more in her favour than anything else. I went to look at what the child was writing; she was translating Darwin's *Zoonomia*.

Every description one reads by Miss Edgeworth of actual things and people makes one wish that she had written more of them. This one is the more interesting from the contrast of the two women, both so remarkable and coming to so different a result in their experience of life.

This eventful visit to Paris is brought to an eventful termination by several gendarmes, who appear early one morning in Mr. Edgeworth's bedroom with orders that he is to get up and to leave Paris immediately. Mr. Edgeworth had been accused of being brother to the Abbé de Firmont. When the mitigated circumstance of his being only a first cousin was put forward by Lord Whitworth, the English ambassador, the Edgeworths received permission to return from the suburb to which they had retired; but private news hurried their departure, and they were only in time to escape the general blockade and detention of English prisoners. After little more than a year of peace, once more war was declared on May 20, 1803. Lovell, the eldest son, who was absent at the time and travelling from Switzerland, was not able to escape in time; nor for twelve years to come was the young man able to return to his own home and family.

X.

Belinda, *Castle Rackrent*, the *Parents' Assistant*, the *Essays on Practical Education*, had all made their mark. The new series of popular tales was also welcomed. There were other books on the way: Miss Edgeworth had several MSS. in hand in various stages, stories to correct for the press. There was also a long novel, first begun by her father and taken up and carried on by her. The *Essays on Practical Education*, which were first published in 1798, continued to be read. M. Pietet had translated the book into French the year before; a third edition was published some ten years later, in 1811, in the preface of which the authors say, "It is due to the public to state that twelve years' additional experience in a numerous family, and careful attention to the results of other modes of education, have given the authors no reason to retract what they have advanced in these volumes."

In Mr. Edgeworth's memoirs, however, his daughter states that he modified his opinions in one or two particulars; allowing more and more liberty to the children, and at the same time conceding greater importance to the habit of early though mechanical efforts of memory. The essays seem in every way in advance of their time; many of the hints contained in them most certainly apply to the little children of to-day no less than to their small grandparents. A lady whose own name is high in the annals of education was telling me that she had been greatly struck by the resemblance between the Edgeworth system and that of Froebel's Kindergarten method, which is now gaining more and more ground in people's estimation, the object of both being not so much to cram instruction into early youth as to draw out each child's powers of observation and attention.

The first series of tales of fashionable life came out in 1809, and contained among other stories *Ennui*, one of the most remarkable of Miss Edgeworth's works. The second series included *The Absentee*, that delightful story of which the lesson should be impressed upon us even more than in the year 1812. *The Absentee* was at first only an episode in the longer novel of *Patronage*; but the public was impatient, so were the publishers, and fortunately for every one *The Absentee* was printed as a separate tale.

Patronage had been begun by Mr. Edgeworth to amuse his wife, who was recovering from illness; it was originally called the *Fortunes of the Freeman Family*, and it is a history with a moral. Morals were more in fashion then than they are now, but this one is obvious without any commentary upon it. It is tolerably certain that clever, industrious, well-conducted people will succeed where idle, scheming, and untrustworthy persons will eventually fail to get on even with powerful friends to back them. But the novel has yet to be written that will prove that, where merits are more equal, a little patronage is not of a great deal of use, or that people's positions in life are exactly proportioned to their merit. Mrs. Barbauld's pretty essay on the inconsistency of human expectations contains the best possible answer to the problem of what people's deserts should be. Let us hope that personal advancement is only one of the many things people try for in life, and that there are other prizes as well worth having. Miss Edgeworth herself somewhere speaks with warm admiration of this very essay. Of the novel itself she says (writing to Mrs. Barbauld), "It is so vast a subject that it flounders about in my hands and quite overpowers me."

It is in this same letter that Miss Edgeworth mentions another circumstance which interested her at this time, and which was one of those events occurring now and again to do equal credit to all concerned.

I have written a preface and notes [she says]—for I too would be an editor—for a little book which a very worthy countrywoman of mine is going to publish: Mrs. Leadbeater, granddaughter to Burke's first preceptor. She is poor. She has behaved most handsomely about some letters of Burke's to her grandfather and herself.

It would have been advantageous to her to publish them; but as Mrs. Burke*—Heaven knows why—objected she desisted.

Mrs. Leadbeater was an Irish Quaker lady whose simple and spirited annals of Ballitore delighted Carlyle in his later days, and whose *Cottage Dialogues* greatly struck Mr. Edgeworth at the time. She had written them to assist her family, and the kind Edgeworths, finding her quite unused to publishing transactions, exerted themselves in every way to help her. Mr. Edgeworth took the MSS. out of the hands of an Irish publisher, and, says Maria, "our excellent friend's worthy successor in St. Paul's Churchyard has, on our recommendation, agreed to publish it for her." Mr. Edgeworth's own letter to Mrs. Leadbeater gives the history of his good-natured offices and their satisfactory results.

From R. L. Edgeworth, July 5, 1810.

Miss Edgeworth desires me as a man of business to write to Mrs. Leadbeater relative to the publication of *Cottage Dialogues*. Miss Edgeworth has written an advertisement, and will, with Mrs. Leadbeater's permission, write notes for an English edition. The scheme which I propose is of two parts—to sell the English copyright to the house of Johnson in London, where we dispose of our own works, and to publish a very large and cheap edition for Ireland for schools. . . . I can probably introduce the book into many places. Our family takes 300 copies, Lady Longford 50, Dr. Beaufort 20, &c. . . . I think Johnson & Co. will give 50*l.* for the English copyright.

After the transaction Mr. Edgeworth wrote to the publishers as follows:—

May 31, 1811 : Edgeworthstown.

My sixty-eighth birthday.

My dear Gentlemen,—I have just heard your letter to Mrs. Leadbeater read by one who dropped tears of pleasure from a sense of your generous and handsome conduct. I take great pleasure in speaking of you to the rest of the world as you deserve, and I cannot refrain from expressing to yourselves the genuine esteem that I feel for you. I know that this direct praise is scarcely allowable, but my advanced age and my close connexion with you must be my excuse.—Yours sincerely,

R. L. E.

Tears seem equivalent to something more than the estimated value of Mrs. Leadbeater's labours. Let us hope that the kind publishers may have behaved even more handsomely than Mr. Edgeworth expected. Miss Edgeworth's notes must also be taken into account. The charming and well-known Mrs. Trench, who was also Mary Leadbeater's friend, writes to her praising them warmly. "Miss Edgeworth's notes on your *Dialogues* have as much spirit and originality as if she had never before explored the mine which many thought she had exhausted."

All these are pleasant specimens of the Edgeworth correspondence, which, however (following the course of most correspondence), does not seem to have been always equally agreeable. There are some letters (among others which I have been allowed to see) written by her about

* Mrs. Burke, hearing more of the circumstances, afterwards sent permission, but Mrs. Leadbeater being a Quakeress, and having once *promised* not to publish, could not take it upon herself to break her covenant.

this time to an unfortunate young man who seems to have annoyed her greatly by his excited importunities.

I thank you [she says] for your friendly zeal in defence of my powers of pathos and sublimity; but I think it carries you much too far when it leads you to imagine that I refrain from principle or virtue from displaying powers that I really do not possess. I assure you that I am not in the least capable of writing a dithyrambic ode, or any other kind of ode.

One is reminded by this suggestion of poor Jane Austen also having to decline to write "an historical novel illustrative of the august House of Coburg." The young man himself seems to have had some wild aspirations after authorship, but to have feared criticism.

The advantage of the art of printing [says his friendly Minerva] is that the mistakes of individuals in reasoning and writing will be corrected in time by the public, so that the cause of truth cannot suffer; and I presume you are too much of a philosopher to mind the trifling mortification that the detection of a mistake might occasion. You know that some sensible person has observed that acknowledging a mistake is saying only in other words that we are wiser to-day than we were yesterday.

He seems at last to have passed the bounds of reasonable correspondence, and she writes as follows:—

Your last letter, dated in June, was many months before it reached me. In answer to all your reproaches at my silence I can only assure you that it was not caused by any change in my opinions or good wishes; but I do not carry on what is called a regular correspondence with anybody except with one or two of my very nearest relations; and it is best to tell the plain truth that my father particularly dislikes my writing letters, so I write as few as I possibly can.

XI.

While Maria Edgeworth was at work in her Irish home, successfully producing her admirable delineations, another woman, born some eight years later, and living in the quiet Hampshire village where the elm trees spread so greenly, was also at work, also writing books that were destined to influence many a generation, but which were meanwhile waiting unknown, unnoticed. Do we not all know the story of the brown paper parcel lying unopened for years on the publisher's shelf and containing Henry Tilney and all his capes, Catherine Morland and all her romance, and the great John Thorpe himself, uttering those valuable literary criticisms which Lord Macaulay, writing to his little sisters at home, used to quote? "Oh, Lord!" says John Thorpe, "I never read novels; I have other things to do." A friend reminds us of Miss Austen's own indignant outburst. "Only a novel! only *Cecilia*, or *Camilla*, or *Belinda*; or, in short, only some work in which the greatest powers of the mind are displayed, the most thorough knowledge of human nature, the happiest delineation of its varieties, the liveliest effusions of wit and humour, are conveyed to the world in the best-chosen language." If the great historian, who loved novels himself, had not assured us that we owe Miss Austen and Miss Edge-

worth to the early influence of the author of *Evelina*, one might grudge *Belinda* to such company.

Pride and Prejudice and *Northanger Abbey* were published about the same time as *Patronage* and *Tales of Fashionable Life*. Their two authors illustrate, curiously enough, the difference between the national characteristics of English and Irish—the breadth, the versatility, the innate wit and gaiety of an Irish mind; the comparative narrowness of range of an English nature; where, however, we may get humour and its never-failing charm. Long afterwards Jane Austen sent one of her novels to Miss Edgeworth, who appreciated it indeed, as such a mind as hers could not fail to do, but it was with no such enthusiasm as that which she felt for other more ambitious works, with more of incident, power, knowledge of the world, in the place of that one subtle quality of humour which for some persons outweighs almost every other. Something, some indefinite sentiment, tells people where they amalgamate and with whom they are intellectually akin; and by some such process of criticism the writer feels that in this little memoir of Miss Edgeworth she has but sketched the outer likeness of this remarkable woman's life and genius; and that she has scarcely done justice to very much in Miss Edgeworth, which so many of the foremost men of her day could appreciate, a power, a versatility, an interest in subjects for their own sakes, not for the sakes of those who are interested in them, which was essentially hers.

It is always interesting to watch a writer's progress in the estimation of critics and reviewers. In 1809 Miss Edgeworth is moderately and respectfully noticed. "As a writer of novels and tales she has a marked peculiarity, that of venturing to dispense common sense to her readers and to bring them within the precincts of real life. Without excluding love from her pages she knows how to assign to it its true limits." In 1812 the reviewer, more used to hear the author's praises on all sides, now starts from a higher key, and, as far as truth to nature and delineation of character are concerned, does not allow a rival except *Don Quixote* and *Gil Blas*. The following criticism is just and more to the point:—

To this power of masterly and minute delineation of character Miss Edgeworth adds another which has rarely been combined with the former, that of interweaving the peculiarities of her persons with the conduct of her piece, and making them without forgetting for a moment their personal consistency, conduce to the general lesson. . . . Her virtue and vice, though copied exactly from nature, lead with perfect ease to a moral conclusion, and are finally punished or rewarded by means which (rare as retribution in this world is) appear for the most part neither inconsistent nor unnatural.

Then follows a review of *Vivian* and of *The Absentee*, which is perhaps the most admirable of her works. We may all remember how Macaulay once pronounced that the scene in *The Absentee* where Lord Colambre discovers himself to his tenantry was the best thing of the sort since the opening of the twenty-second book of the *Odyssey*.

An article by Lord Dudley, which is still to be quoted, appeared in

the *Quarterly Review* in 1814. What he says of her works applies no less to Miss Edgeworth's own life than to the principles which she inculcates.

The old rule was for heroes and heroines to fall suddenly and irretrievably in love. If they fell in love with the right person so much the better; if not, it could not be helped, and the novel ended unhappily. And, above all, it was held quite irregular for the most reasonable people to make any use whatever of their reason on the most important occasion of their lives. Miss Edgeworth has presumed to treat this mighty power with far less reverence. She has analysed it and found it does not consist of one simple element, but that several common ingredients enter into its composition—habit, esteem, a belief of some corresponding sentiment and of suitability in the character and circumstances of the party. She has pronounced that reason, timely and vigorously applied, is almost a specific, and, following up this bold empirical line of practice, she has actually produced cases of the entire cure of persons who had laboured under its operation. Her favourite qualities are prudence, firmness, temper, and that active, vigilant good sense which, without checking the course of our kind affections, exercises its influence at every moment and surveys deliberately the motives and consequences of every action. Utility is her object, reason and experience her means.

XII.

This review of Lord Dudley's must have come out after a visit from the Edgeworth family to London in 1813, which seems to have been a most brilliant and amusing campaign. "I know the homage that was paid you," wrote Mrs. Barbauld, speaking of the event, "and I exulted in it for your sake and for my sex's sake." Miss Edgeworth was at the height of her popularity, in good spirits and good health. Mr. Edgeworth was seventy, but he looked years younger, and was still in undiminished health and vigour. The party was welcomed, fêted, sought after everywhere. Except that they miss seeing Madame d'Arblay and leave London before the arrival of Madame de Staël, they seem to have come in for everything that was brilliant, fashionable, and entertaining. They breakfast with poets, they sup with marquises, they call upon duchesses and scientific men. Maria's old friend the Duchess of Wellington is not less her friend than she was in County Longford. Every one likes them and comes knocking at their lodging-house door, while Maria upstairs is writing a letter, standing at a chest of drawers. "Miss Edgeworth is delightful," says Tom Moore, "not from display, but from repose and unaffectedness, the least pretending person." Even Lord Byron writes warmly of the authoress whose company is so grateful, and who goes her simple, pleasant way cheerful and bringing kind cheer, and making friends with the children as well as with the elders. Many of these children in their lives fully justified her interest, children whom we in turn have known and looked up to as distinguished greyheaded men.

Some one once asked Miss Edgeworth how she came to understand children as she did, what charm she used to win them. "I don't know," she said kindly; "I lie down and let them crawl over me." She was greatly pleased on one occasion when at a crowded party a little girl suddenly started forth, looked at her hard, and said, "I like simple

Susan best," and rushed away overwhelmed at her own audacity. The same lady who was present on this occasion asked her a question which we must all be grateful to have solved for us—how it happened that the respective places of Laura and Rosamond came to be transposed in *Patronage*, Laura having been the wiser elder sister in the *Purple Jar*, and appearing suddenly as the younger in the novel. Miss Edgeworth laughed and said that Laura had been so preternaturally wise and thoughtful as a child, she could never have kept her up to the mark, and so she thought it best to change the character altogether.

During one of her visits to London Miss Edgeworth went to dine at the house of Mr. Marshall; and his daughter, Lady Monteaule, tells a little story which gives an impression, and a kind one, of the celebrated guest. Everything had been prepared in her honour, the lights lighted, the viands were cooked. Dinner was announced, and some important person was brought forward to hand Miss Edgeworth down, when it was discovered that she had vanished. For a moment the company and the dinner were all at a standstill. She was a small person, but diligent search was made. Miss Edgeworth had last been seen with the children of the house, and she was eventually found in the back kitchen, escorted by the said children, who, having confided their private affairs to her sympathetic ear, had finally invited her to come with them and see some rabbits which they were rearing down below. A lady who used to live at Clifton as a little girl, and to be sometimes prescribed for by Dr. King, was once brought up to Miss Edgeworth, and she told me how very much puzzled she felt when the bright old lady, taking her by the hand, said, "Well, my dear, how do you do, and how is my excellent brother-in-law?" One can imagine what a vague sort of being an "excellent brother-in-law" would seem to a very young child.

We read in Miss Edgeworth's memoir of her father that Mr. Edgeworth recovered from his serious illness in 1814 to enjoy a few more years of life among his friends, his children, and his experiments. His good humour and good spirits were undiminished, and he used to quote an old friend's praise of "the privileges and convenience of old age." He was seventy, but he seems to have continued his own education to the end of life. "Without affecting to be young, he exerted himself to prevent any of his faculties from sinking into the indolent state which portends their decay," and his daughter says that he went on learning to the last, correcting his faults and practising his memory by various devices, so that it even improved with age.

In one of his last letters to Mrs. Beaufort, his wife's mother, he speaks with no little paternal pleasure of his home and his children: "Such excellent principles, such just views of human life and manners, such cultivated understandings, such charming tempers make a little Paradise about me;" while with regard to his daughter's works he adds concerning the book which was about to appear, "If Maria's tales fail with the public, you will hear of my hanging myself."

Mr. Edgeworth died in the summer of 1817, at home, surrounded by his family, grateful, as he says, to Providence for allowing his body to perish before his mind.

During the melancholy months which succeeded her father's death Maria hardly wrote any letters; her sight was in a most alarming state. The tears, she said, felt in her eyes like the cutting of a knife. She had overworked them all the previous winter, sitting up at night and struggling with her grief as she wrote *Ormond*. She was now unable to use them without pain. . . . Edgeworthtown now belonged to Lovell, the eldest surviving brother, but he wished it to continue the home of the family. Maria set to work to complete her father's memoirs and to fulfil his last wish.

It was not without great hesitation and anxiety that she set to work to complete her father's *Life*. There is a touching sentence in a letter to her aunt Ruxton. "I felt the happiness of my life was at stake. Even if all the rest of the world had praised it and you had been dissatisfied, how miserable should I have been!" And there is another sentence written at Bowood, very sad and full of remembrance. "I feel as if I had lived a hundred years and was left alive after everybody else." The book came out, and many things were said about it, not all praise. The *Quarterly* was so spiteful and intolerant that it seemed almost personal in its violence. It certainly would have been a great loss to the world had this curious and interesting memoir never been published, but at the time the absence of certain phrases and expressions of opinions which Mr. Edgeworth had never specially professed seemed greatly to offend the reviewers.

The worst of these attacks Miss Edgeworth never read, and the task finished, the sad months over, the poor eyes recovered, she crossed to England.

XIII.

One is glad to hear of her away and at Bowood in good company, in all senses of the word. Her old friend Lord Henry Petty, now Lord Lansdowne, was still her friend and full of kindness. Outside the house spread a green deer-park to rest her tired eyes, within were pleasant and delightful companions to cheer her soul. Sir Samuel Romilly was there, of whom she speaks with affectionate admiration, as she does of her kind host and hostess. "I much enjoy the sight of Lady Lansdowne's happiness with her husband and her children. Beauty, fortune, cultivated society all united—in short, everything that the most reasonable or unreasonable could wish. She is so amiable and desirous to make others happy."

Miss Edgeworth's power of making other people see with her eyes is very remarkable in all these letters; with a little imagination one could almost feel as if one might be able to travel back into the pleasant society in which she lived. When she goes abroad soon after with her two younger sisters (Fanny, the baby whose head so nearly came off in her arms, and Harriet, who have both grown up by this time to be pretty and elegant young ladies), the sisters are made welcome everywhere. In Paris, as

in London, troops of acquaintance came forward to receive "Madame Maria et mesdemoiselles ses sœurs," as they used to be announced. Most of their old friends were there still; only the children had grown up and were now new friends to be greeted. It is a confusion of names in visionary succession, comprising English people no less than French. Miss Edgeworth notes it all with a sure hand and true pen; it is as one of the sketch-books of a great painter, where whole pictures are indicated in a few just lines. Here is a peep at the Abbaye aux Bois in 1820:—

We went to Madame Récamier in her convent, l'Abbaye aux Bois, up seventy-eight steps. All came in with asthma. Elegant room; she as elegant as ever. Matthieu de Montmorenci, the ex-Queen of Sweden, Madame de Boigne, a charming woman, and Madame la Maréchale de —, a battered beauty, smelling of garlic and screeching in vain to pass as a wit. . . . Madame Récamier has no more taken the veil than I have, and is as little likely to do it. She is quite beautiful; she dresses herself and her little room with elegant simplicity, and lives in a convent only because it is cheap and respectable.

One sees it all, the convent, the company, the last refrain of former triumphs, the faithful romantic Matthieu de Montmorenci, and above all the poor Maréchale, who will screech for ever in her garlic. Let us turn the page, we find another picture from these not long past days:—

Breakfast at Camille Jordan's; it was half-past twelve before the company assembled, and we had an hour's delightful conversation with Camille Jordan and his wife in her spotless white muslin and little cap, sitting at her husband's feet as he lay on the sofa; as clean, as nice, as fresh, as thoughtless of herself as my mother. At this breakfast we saw three of the most distinguished of that party who call themselves "les Doctrinaires" and say they are more attached to measures than to men.

Here is another portrait of a portrait and its painter:—

Princess Potemkin is a Russian, but she has all the grace, softness, winning manner of the Polish ladies. Oval face, pale, with the finest, softest, most expressive chestnut dark eyes. She has a sort of politeness which pleases peculiarly, a mixture of the ease of high rank and early habit with something that is sentimental without affectation. Madame le Brun is painting her picture. Madame le Brun is sixty-six, with great vivacity as well as genius, and better worth seeing than her pictures, for though they are speaking she speaks.

Another visit the sisters paid, which will interest the readers of Madame de la Rochejaquelin's memoirs of the war in the Vendée:—

In a small bedroom, well furnished, with a fire just lighted, we found Madame de la Rochejaquelin on the sofa; her two daughters at work, one spinning with a distaff, the other embroidering muslin. Madame is a fat woman with a broad, round, fair face and a most benevolent expression, her hair cut short and perfectly grey as seen under her cap; the rest of the face much too young for such grey locks; and though her face and bundled form all squashed on to a sofa did not at first promise much of gentility, you could not hear her speak or hear her for three minutes without perceiving that she was well-born and well-bred.

Madame de la Rochejaquelin seems to have confided in Miss Edgeworth.

"I am always sorry when any stranger sees me, *parce que je sais que je détruis toute illusion. Je sais que je devrais avoir l'air d'une héroïne.*" She is much better than a heroine; she is benevolence and truth itself.

We must not forget the scientific world where Madame Maria was no less at home than in fashionable literary cliques. The sisters saw something of Cuvier at Paris; in Switzerland they travelled with the Aragos. They were on their way to the Marcets at Geneva when they stopped at Coppet, where Miss Edgeworth was always specially happy in the society of Madame Auguste de Staël and Madame de Broglie. But Switzerland is not one of the places where only human beings are in the ascendant; other influences there are almost stronger than human ones. "I did not conceive it possible that I should feel so much pleasure from the beauties of nature as I have done since I came to this country. The first moment when I saw Mont Blanc will remain an era in my life—a new idea, a new feeling standing alone in the mind." Miss Edgeworth presently comes down from her mountain heights and, full of interest, throws herself into the talk of her friends at Coppet and Geneva, from which she quotes as it occurs to her. Here is Rocca's indignant speech to Lord Byron, who was abusing the stupidity of the Genevese. "Eh! milord, pourquoi venir vous fourrer parmi ces honnêtes gens?" There is Arago's curious anecdote of Napoleon, who sent for him after the battle of Waterloo, offering him a large sum of money to accompany him to America. The Emperor had formed a project for founding a scientific colony in the New World. Arago was so indignant with him for abandoning his troops that he would have nothing to say to the plan. A far more touching story is Dr. Marcet's account of Josephine. "Poor Josephine! Do you remember Dr. Marcet's telling us that when he breakfasted with her she said, pointing to her flowers, 'These are my subjects. I try to make them happy'?"

Among other expeditions they made a pilgrimage to the home of the author of a work for which Miss Edgeworth seems to have entertained a mysterious enthusiasm. The novel was called *Caroline de Lichfield*, and was so much admired at the time that Miss Seward mentions a gentleman who wrote from abroad to propose for the hand of the authoress, and who, more fortunate than the poor Chevalier Edelcrantz, was not refused by the lady. Perhaps some similarity of experience may have led Maria Edgeworth to wish for the lady's acquaintance. Happily time was past for Miss Edgeworth to look back; her life was now shaped and moulded in its own groove; the consideration, the variety, the difficulties of unmarried life were hers, its agreeable change, its monotony of feeling and of unselfish happiness, compared with the necessary regularity, the more personal felicity, the less liberal interests of the married. Her life seems to have been full to overflowing of practical occupation and consideration for others. What changing scenes and colours, what a number of voices, what a crowd of outstretched hands, what interesting processions of people pass across her path! There is something of her father's optimism and simplicity of nature in her unceasing brightness and activity, in her resolutions to improve as time goes on. Her young brothers and sisters grow to be men and women; with her

sisters' marriages new interests touch her warm heart. Between her and the brothers of the younger generation who did not turn to her as a sort of mother there may have been too great a difference of age for that companionship to continue which often exists between a child and a grown-up person. So at least one is led to believe was the case as regards one of them, mentioned in a memoir which has recently appeared. But to her sisters she could be friend, protector, chaperone, sympathising companion, and elder sister to the end of her days. We hear of them all at Bowood again on their way back to Ireland, and then we find them all at home settling down to the old life, Maria reading Sévigné of whom she never tires.

XIV.

One of the prettiest and most sympathetic incidents in Maria Edgeworth's life was a subsequent expedition to Abbotsford and the pleasure she gave to its master. They first met in Edinburgh, and her short account conjures up the whole scene before us :—

Ten o'clock struck as I read his note. We were tired, we were not fit to be seen, but I thought it right to accept Walter Scott's cordial invitation, sent for a hackney coach, and just as we were, without dressing, we went. As the coach stopped we saw the hall lighted, and the moment the door opened heard the joyous sounds of loud singing. Three servants' "The Miss Edgeworths!" sounded from hall to landing-place, and as I paused for a moment in the anteroom I heard the first sound of Walter Scott's voice—"The Miss Edgeworths *come!*" The room was lighted by only one globe lamp; a circle were singing loud and beating time: all stopped in an instant.

Is not this picture complete? Scott himself she describes as "full of genius without the slightest effort at expression, delightfully natural, more lame but not so unwieldy as she expected." Lady Scott she goes on to sketch in some half-dozen words—"French, large dark eyes, civil and good-natured."

When we wakened the next morning the whole scene of the preceding night seemed like a dream [she continues]; however at twelve came the real Lady Scott, and we called for Scott at the Parliament House, who came out of the Courts with joyous face, as if he had nothing on earth to do or to think of but to show us Edinburgh.

In her quick, discriminating way she looks round and notes them all one by one.

Mr. Lockhart is reserved and silent, but he appears to have much sensibility under this reserve. Mrs. Lockhart is very pleasing—a slight, elegant figure and graceful simplicity of manner, perfectly natural. There is something most winning in her affectionate manner to her father. He dotes upon her.

A serious illness intervened for poor Maria before she and her devoted young nurses could reach Abbotsford itself. There she began to recover, and Lady Scott watched over her and prescribed for her with the most tender care and kindness. "Lady Scott felt the attention and respect Maria showed to her, perceiving that she valued her and treated her as a friend," says Mrs. Edgeworth; "not, as too many of Sir Walter's

guests did, with neglect." This is Miss Edgeworth's description of the Abbotsford family life :—

It is quite delightful to see Scott and his family in the country ; breakfast, dinner, supper, the same flow of kindness, fondness, and genius, far, far surpassing his works, his letters, and all my hopes and imagination. His Castle of Abbotsford is magnificent, but I forget it in thinking of him.

The return visit, when Scotland visited Ireland, was no less successful.

Maria and my daughter Harriet accompanied Sir Walter and Miss Scott, Mr. Lockhart, and Captain and Mrs. Scott to Killarney. They travelled in an open calèche of Sir Walter's. . . .

Sir Walter was, like Maria, never put out by discomforts on a journey, but always ready to make the best of everything and to find amusement in every incident. He was delighted with Maria's eagerness for everybody's comfort, and diverted himself with her admiration of a green baize-covered door at the inn at Killarney. "Miss Edgeworth, you are so mightily pleased with that door, I think you will carry it away with you to Edgeworthtown."

Miss Edgeworth's friendships were certainly very remarkable, and comprise almost all the interesting people of her day in France as well as in England. She was liked, trusted, surrounded, and she appears to have had the art of winning to her all the great men. We know the Duke of Wellington addressed verses to her ; there are pleasant intimations of her acquaintance with Sir James Mackintosh, Romilly, Moore, and Rogers, and that most delightful of human beings Sydney Smith, whom she thoroughly appreciated and admired. Describing her brother Frank, she says, somewhere, "I am much inclined to think that he has a natural genius for happiness ; in other words, as Sydney Smith would say, *great hereditary constitutional joy*." "To attempt to Boswell Sydney Smith's conversation would be to outboswell Boswell," she writes in another letter home ; but in Lady Holland's memoir of her father there is a pleasant little account of Miss Edgeworth herself, "delightful, clever, and sensible," listening to Sydney Smith. She seems to have gone the round of his parish with him while he scolded, doctored, joked his poor people according to their needs.

"During her visit she saw much of my father," says Lady Holland ; "and her talents as well as her thorough knowledge and love of Ireland made her conversation peculiarly agreeable to him." On her side Maria writes warmly desiring that some Irish bishopric might be forced upon Sydney Smith, which "his own sense of natural charity and humanity would forbid him refuse. . . . In the twinkling of an eye—such an eye as his—he would see all our manifold grievances up and down the country. One word, one *bon mot* of his, would do more for us, I guess, than ——'s four hundred pages and all the like with which we have been bored."

The two knew how to make good company for one another ; the quiet Jeanie Deans body could listen as well as give out. We are told that it was not so much that she said brilliant things, but that a general

perfume of wit ran through her conversation, and she most certainly had the gift of appreciating the good things of others. Whether in that "scene of simplicity, truth, and nature" a London rout, or in some quiet Hampstead parlour talking to an old friend, or in her own home among books and relations and interests of every sort, Miss Edgeworth seems to have been constantly the same, with presence of mind and presence of heart too, ready to respond to everything. I think her warmth of heart shines even brighter than her wit at times. "I could not bear the idea that you suspected me of being so weak, so vain, so senseless," she once wrote to Mrs. Barbauld, "as to have my head turned by a little fashionable flattery." If her head was not turned it must have been because her spirit was stout enough to withstand the world's almost irresistible influence.

Not only the great men but the women too are among her friends. She writes prettily of Mrs. Somerville, with her smiling eyes and pink colour, her soft voice, strong, well-bred Scotch accent, timid, not disqualifying timid, but naturally modest. "While her head is among the stars her feet are firm upon the earth." She is "delighted" with a criticism of Madame de Staël's, in a letter to M. Dumont. "*Vraiment elle était digne de l'enthousiasme, mais elle se perd dans votre triste utilité.*" It is difficult to understand why this should have given Miss Edgeworth so much pleasure; and here finally is a little vision conjured up for us of her meeting with Mrs. Fry among her prisoners.

Little doors, and thick doors, and doors of all sorts were unbolted and unlocked, and on we went through dreary but clean passages till we came to a room where rows of empty benches fronted us, a table on which lay a large Bible. Several ladies and gentlemen entered, took their seats on benches at either side of the table in silence. Enter Mrs. Fry in a drab-coloured silk cloak and a plain, borderless Quaker cap, a most benevolent countenance, calm, benign. "I must make an enquiry. Is Maria Edgeworth here?" And when I went forward she bade me come and sit beside her. Her first smile as she looked upon me I can never forget. The prisoners came in in an orderly manner and ranged themselves upon the benches.

XV.

"In this my sixtieth year, to commence in a few days," says Miss Edgeworth, writing to her cousin Margaret Ruxton, "I am resolved to make great progress." "Rosamond at sixty," says Miss Ruxton, touched and amused. Her resolutions were not idle.

"The universal difficulties of the money market in the year 1826 were felt by us," says Mrs. Edgeworth in her memoir, "and Maria, who since her father's death had given up rent-receiving, now resumed it; undertook the management of her brother Lovell's affairs, which she conducted with consummate skill and perseverance, and weathered the storm that swamped so many in this financial crisis." We also hear of an opportune windfall in the shape of some valuable diamonds, which an old lady, a distant relation, left in her will to Miss Edgeworth, who sold them and built a market-house for Edgeworthtown with the proceeds.

April 8, 1827.—I am quite well, and in high good humour and good spirits, in consequence of having received the whole of Lovell's half-year's rents in full, with pleasure to the tenants and without the least fatigue or anxiety to myself.

It was about this time her novel of *Helen* was written, the last of her books, the only one that her father had not revised. There is a vivid account given by one of her brothers of the family assembled in the library to hear the manuscript read out, of their anxiety and their pleasure as they realised how good it was, how spirited, how well equal to her standard. Ticknor, in his account of Miss Edgeworth, says that the talk of Lady Davenant in *Helen* is very like Miss Edgeworth's own manner. His visit to Edgeworthtown was not long after the publication of the book. His description, if only for her mention of her father, is worth quoting :—

As we drove to the door Miss Edgeworth came out to meet us, a small, short, spare body of about sixty-seven, with extremely frank and kind manners, but who always looks straight into your face with a pair of mild deep grey eyes whenever she speaks to you. With characteristic directness she did not take us into the library until she had told us that we should find there Mrs. Alison, of Edinburgh, and her aunt, Miss Sneyd, a person very old and infirm, and that the only other persons constituting the family were Mrs. Edgeworth, Miss Honora Edgeworth, and Dr. Alison, a physician. . . . Miss Edgeworth's conversation was always ready, as full of vivacity and variety as I can imagine. . . . She was disposed to defend everybody, even Lady Morgan, as far as she could. And in her intercourse with her family she was quite delightful, referring constantly to Mrs. Edgeworth, who seems to be the authority in all matters of fact, and most kindly repeating jokes to her infirm aunt, Miss Sneyd, who cannot hear them, and who seems to have for her the most unbounded affection and admiration. . . . About herself as an author she seems to have no reserve or secrets. She spoke with great kindness and pleasure of a letter I brought to her from Mr. Peabody, explaining some passage in his review of *Helen* which had troubled her from its allusion to her father. "But," she added, "no one can know what I owe to my father. He advised and directed me in everything. I never could have done anything without him. There are things I cannot be mistaken about, though other people can. I know them." As she said this the tears stood in her eyes, and her whole person was moved. . . . It was, therefore, something of a trial to talk so brilliantly and variously as she did from nine in the morning to past eleven at night.

She was unfeignedly glad to see good company. Here is her account of another visitor :—

Sept. 26.—The day before yesterday we were amusing ourselves by telling who among literary and scientific people we should wish to come here next. Francis said Coleridge; I said Herschell. Yesterday morning, as I was returning from my morning walk at half-past eight, I saw a bonnetless maid in the walk, with a letter in her hand, in search of me. When I opened the letter I found it was from Mr. Herschell, and that he was waiting for an answer at Mr. Briggs's inn. I have seldom been so agreeably surprised, and now that he is gone and that he has spent twenty-four hours here, if the fairy were to ask me the question again I should still more eagerly say, "Mr. Herschell, ma'am, if you please."

She still came over to England from time to time, visiting at her sisters' houses. Honora was now Lady Beaufort; another sister, Fanny, the object of her closest and most tender affection, was Mrs. Lestock Wilson. Age brought no change in her mode of life. Time passes

with tranquil steps, for her not hasting unduly. "I am perfect," she writes at the age of seventy-three to her stepmother of seventy-two, "so no more about it, and thank you from my heart and every component part of my precious self for all the care, and successful care, you have taken of me, your old petted nurseling."

Alas! it is sad to realise that quite late in life fresh sorrows fell upon this warm-hearted woman. Troubles gather; young sisters fade away in their beauty and happiness. But in sad times and good times the old home is still unchanged, and remains for those that are left to turn to for shelter, for help and consolation. To the very last Miss Edgeworth kept up her reading, her correspondence, her energy. All along we have heard of her active habits—out in the early morning in her garden, coming in to the nine o'clock breakfast with her hands full of roses, sitting by and talking and reading her letters while the others ate. Her last letter to her old friend Sir Henry Holland was after reading the first volume of Lord Macaulay's history. Sir Henry took the letter to Lord Macaulay, who was so much struck by its discrimination that he asked leave to keep it.

She was now eighty-two years of age, and we find her laughing kindly at the anxiety of her sister and brother-in-law, who had heard of her climbing a ladder to wind up an old clock at Edgeworthstown. "I am heartily obliged and delighted by your being such a goose and Richard such a gander," she says, "as to be frightened out of your wits by my climbing a ladder to take off the top of the clock." She had not felt that there was anything to fear as once again she set the time that was so nearly at an end for her. Her share of life's hours had been well spent and well enjoyed; with a peaceful and steady hand and tranquil heart she might mark the dial for others whose hours were still to come.

Mrs. Edgeworth's own words tell all that remains to be told.

It was on the morning of May 22, 1849, that she was taken suddenly ill with pain in the region of the heart, and after a few hours breathed her last in my arms. She had always wished to die quickly, at home, and that I should be with her. All her wishes were fulfilled. She was gone, and nothing like her again can we see in this world.

The Menacing Comet.

A FEW months ago a dismal report appeared to the effect that the comet of 1843, which was supposed to have returned in 1880, would come back again in 1895 and bring about the end of the world. The origin of the report was not altogether clear. At least it was not altogether clear to the writer of these lines, who, if the report had had any legitimate foundation, should have known something about it. It seems that a remark to the effect that the comet of 1880 travelled in the same orbit as the comet of 1843, and was probably the same body, but that if that were the case, it had returned long before it should have done, so that the period of revolution seemed to be shortening, had been to some degree misapprehended.

It had been suggested by several Fellows of the Royal Astronomical Society that if the comet of 1880 were really the same as that of 1843, the next return might occur in a very few years; perhaps, said Mr. Marth, in about fifteen; and each return thereafter at shorter and ever shorter intervals. For the path of the comet carries it in very close proximity to the orb of the sun; and it is generally believed that a retardation of the comet's motion must occur at each return to the sun's neighbourhood, for the simple reason that the comet can hardly be supposed to get through the matter which forms the sun's corona, without encountering some resistance. The more the comet is retarded by such resistance, the faster it will travel round its orbit—paradoxical though this may sound. At each return it will encounter more and more effective resistance, until at length it must be absorbed into the body of the sun.

Whether such absorption would produce any great effect or not upon the sun, and through him upon the solar system, was a question which to many seemed answerable only in one way. Newton had pointed out that comets might serve as fuel to the sun, and perhaps produce disastrous effects in that way, by unduly increasing the solar light and heat. "A comet," he said, "after certain revolutions, by coming nearer and nearer to the sun, would have all its volatile parts condensed, and become a matter fit to recruit and replenish the sun (which must waste by the constant light and heat it emits) as a faggot would this fire if put into it." (He was speaking to Mr. Conduitt at the time, beside a wood fire.) "And that would probably be the effect of the comet of 1680 sooner or later; for by the observations made upon it, it seemed to have a tail of thirty or forty degrees, when it went from the sun. It might, perhaps, make five or six revolutions more first; but whenever it did, it

would so much increase the heat of the sun, that this earth would be burnt, and no animals in it could live." "He took the three phenomena seen by Hipparchus, Tycho Brahé, and Kepler's disciples," he added, "to have been of this kind; for he could not otherwise account for an extraordinary light, as those were, appearing all at once amongst the fixed stars (all which he took to be suns enlightening other planets, as our sun does ours) as big as Mercury or Venus seems to us, and gradually diminishing for sixteen months and then sinking into nothing."

But although what we now know respecting the mass of comets is by no means so much opposed to these views as many seem to imagine, our knowledge of the way in which the sun's heat is maintained will not permit us to adopt Newton's opinion. Nor will the accepted views as to the origin of the sun's heat justify us in accepting a belief in more than a very moderate accession of heat as likely to accrue, under any influences due to comets now actually travelling around the sun. All those which have passed once round the sun's immediate neighbourhood, can pass again, and yet again, with effects which can never greatly exceed those produced at their first passage. If at any one perihelion passage a comet is slightly retarded, it will be slightly retarded again at its next passage close by the sun, somewhat more at the next return, and so on continually, until it is finally absorbed, the interval between these passages continually diminishing. Only in the case of great retardation at one passage, will the retardation at the next perihelion passage be markedly greater; but in this case the effects at the earlier passage should have been noteworthy; so that as no noteworthy sudden accession of solar light and heat has ever been observed, no such earlier passage has yet occurred which should make us seriously fear the next passage of the same comet by the sun's neighbourhood.

The fears entertained, therefore, respecting the next return of the comet of 1843 are without foundation. If that comet was really so checked in speed in 1843 that it returned in thirty-seven years instead of the much longer period assigned to it by the best astronomers, then we had an opportunity at that time of estimating the effect of such interruption of the comet's motion. But no effects were then perceived. The sun was neither brighter nor hotter than usual. The inference is, then, that that frictional resistance cannot appreciably affect the sun's condition. In 1880 we had a repetition of this experience—assuming that the comet of 1880 was the same body. The sun in 1880 shone much as he had done in 1879, much as he did later in 1881 and 1882. So that the world might await with calmness the future returns of this sun-lashing comet, satisfied that whatever effect might be produced on the comet, very little would be produced on the sun or the solar system.

But now suddenly news comes that a comet has been seen which American men of science have identified with the comet of 1843 and 1880, so that from thirty-seven years the period has dwindled to little more than two years and a half (more exactly 2 years, 7 months, and 21

days), which would leave us every reason for believing that the next return would occur in a few months, and the final absorption of the comet by the sun a few weeks later. And an English astronomer of deserved repute has done something more than endorse these ill-omened predictions; he has pretty clearly indicated his opinion that the approaching destruction of the comet portends events of the most serious import to this earth and all who dwell on it; that, in fact, the time is drawing near when Prospero's prediction is to be fulfilled that—

The great globe itself,
Yea, all which it inherit, shall dissolve,
And like an insubstantial pageant faded,
Leave not a rack behind.

“Could there have been anything more heartbreaking to all astronomical souls,” writes Professor Piazzi Smyth, Astronomer Royal for Scotland, “than the uninterrupted cloud by day and by night of our unfortunate climate, ever since the announcement of the brilliant daylight comet of Monday, September 18? Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday, and their several nights, have each and all been uniformly utterly covered in with thick impenetrable clouds. And yet we ought to confess that one other thing might have occurred even so as to make that cloudy appearance more aggravating, more grievously disappointing still. That one overtopping culmination of misfortune would have been”—if the comet had been announced as approaching instead of receding.

It will be seen that the Astronomer Royal for Scotland regards the comet in question as a rather important body. It is not an everyday comet whose approach is so important that failing to see it must be regarded as an “overtopping culmination of misfortune.” Now *this* comet seems to be none other than *that* comet. The body, or collection of bodies (for so rather must a comet now be regarded), which was visible to the naked eye on September 18 close to the sun—“a yard or so from the sun,” writes one startled observer—is no other than the comet of 1843, whose tail stretched half across the heavens, and which—like the comet of last month—was seen in full daylight; nay, even “close by the sun.”

Rightly to apprehend the significance of this portent, as viewed by Professor Smyth and many others, chiefly—unlike him—unscientific persons, we should inform our readers that in this year, according to the prophecies symbolically indicated in the Great Pyramid, the end of the dispensation which began 1882 years ago is in some way as yet unknown to be brought about. Some celestial body, “the star in the East” of the Magi, appeared then: for aught we know it may have been the same comet, and the Wise Men of the East saw in it evidence that a new dispensation was about to begin. It was fitting, then, that this year, which has now been for several years announced as the time of the end of that dispensation, a similar celestial appearance, or the same body, perhaps,

should announce "the beginning of the end." We cannot reasonably doubt this, for careful measurement shows that the Grand Gallery in the Great Pyramid is 1,882 inches long; these inches being each the twenty-fifth part of the sacred cubit, which Pyramidalists assure us is the limit of length in that marvellous structure. Moreover, it is not altogether an accident or a mere coincidence which has brought the British army to the feet of the Great Pyramid at the very time—perhaps at the very hour—when the great comet was passing its perihelion. On September 13 the British cavalry entered Cairo; on September 18 the great comet could be seen with the naked eye (though it had passed the time of its greatest splendour, described by Professor Smyth as the "ecstatic display at perihelion passage"), and was then beginning to recede. What more natural than to suppose that as the vanguard of Sir Garnet Wolseley's army approached the base of the Pyramids, the great comet was in the very ecstasy of perihelion glory, rushing through the richest portion of the sun's coronal streamers, molten by the solar heat, resisted by the densely aggregated meteor-streams, but so retarded that its return will be hastened, and that in a few months it will come back to effect the final purpose of its existence! If any doubt could be entertained on the subject, it should be removed by the consideration that the British nation has been proved, to the satisfaction of nearly all true believers in the Great Pyramid prophecies, to be no other than the lost ten tribes of Israel.

If this sounds a little strange—or, shall we say, the least little bit premature?—let the following words by the Astronomer Royal for Scotland, by no means the least able of our astronomers, and *facile princeps* among Pyramidalists, be carefully considered.

"What comet," he asks, "was this? The little that was seen on Monday, September 18, is not enough to give any clue, and no London journals, *whether scientific or political*, which I have seen up to September 23, throw any light on the matter. But a note by cable from America, if fully correct, is of *profound import*. Indeed, *nothing so important to all mankind has occurred before, through eighteen hundred years at least of astronomical history*. And there is this prospect of the statement being true, that it is given under the name of Professor Lewis Boss, one of the most able and learned mathematical astronomers of the Union, and, we may say now (such has been the rapid progress of astronomy during the last few years in that country), of the world. He is said, then, to have concluded from his observations that the comet of last Monday was the comet of 1880 and 1843. A comet on each of these occasions was recognised to have passed closer to the sun's surface than any other known comet. But why has it come back so soon? In 1843 it appeared to be moving in an orbit of 170 years, and yet it came back in 1880, or in only 37 years. That was startling enough, though only looked on by the world as a case of failure of astronomical prediction. But having gone off in 1880 on an understanding generally come

to by the best astronomers in Europe, North America, Rio Janeiro, the Argentine Republic, and Australia—at all which latter places it had been well observed—that it was not to return before 37 years (and other comets, such as Halley's, and Encke's, keep to their times of revolution round the sun nearly uniformly for centuries), behold this comet has returned now, on the strength of this cablegram from America, in two years. In which case, who can say whether it may not be back again from space in a few months; and then, not merely to graze close past, but actually to fall into the sun, which is so evidently increasing its hold upon it at every revolution? Wherefore we may be near upon the time for witnessing what effects will be produced when such an event takes place in the solar system, as astronomers have hitherto only distantly speculated upon, and no mortal eye is known to have ever beheld."

This brings the matter home to all of us, indeed. Astronomers like Newton have distantly speculated upon the effects which would be produced if a comet fell into the sun. I fear that I have not altogether refrained from such speculations myself. Indeed, the misapprehension to which I referred at the beginning of this paper arose chiefly from such speculations of my own. For speaking, not of such grazing contact as may occur in the case of the comet of 1843 and 1880, but of such direct impact as *may* through some unlucky chance occur in the case of some comet which comes to our sun from interstellar space, I have expressed the opinion that such impact may raise the sun's heat temporarily to such intensity that every living thing on this earth would be destroyed, though the increase of heat might not last more than a few weeks or even days. I also expressed my belief (entertained before I had heard that Sir Isaac Newton, in conversation with Mr. Conduitt, had expressed similar views) that the appearance of so-called "new stars" can only be explained by the downfall of meteoric and cometic matter upon some sun like our own, which up to that time had been steadily pouring forth heat and light to nourish the worlds circling around it. This opinion, chancing to be expressed in the closing paragraph of the same paper in which I had indicated my belief that the comet of 1880 really was the same body as the comet of 1843, returned before its time, and that this body would return next after a yet shorter interval, led many to imagine that I had expressed the opinion that the comet of 1843 and 1880, returning soon, would cause our sun to blaze out with greatly increased splendour, and so to destroy all living creatures on this earth.

Now the actual risk from the destruction of this comet by the sun I believe to be very small indeed. But as to the identity of the comet which passed its perihelion on September 17 last and the comets of 1880 and 1843 there is, I think, little room for doubt. I have carefully compared the observed positions on September 17, 18, 19, 22, 24, and 29, with the known orbit of the comet of 1843, and they all agree so closely as to leave no doubt that the new comet is travelling in the same track, so far as the part near the sun is concerned. But I note one

circumstance which seems hitherto to have escaped attention. Although the course of the new comet as it passed away was on the right track, the comet was not making nearly so much way as it should have done, if moving even in the reduced period of $2\frac{2}{3}$ years, or even in one year, or in half a year. In other words, the reduction of speed experienced by the comet last September was such that the comet will be back within four or five *months*, possibly in less time still than that. It may be that the observations (up to the day of my writing this, which of course precedes by several weeks the day when these words can be read) have been insufficiently exact for accuracy in this respect. But if they can be trusted, the comet will be back in a very short time indeed, possibly before the end of the year—an announcement which should fill the hearts of Pyramidalists with joy.

Be this as it may, it is certain that the splendid comet seen on September 18 and 19 close to the noonday sun, although not seen under conditions at all favourable to ordinary observation, gave of all the comets seen in this century, nay, of all ever seen by man, the fullest promise that one day cometic mysteries will be interpreted. An observation was made upon this comet successfully, which, repeated on similar comets more favourably situated, will give information such as astronomers have long regarded as essential to the solution of cometic mysteries, but such also as they have hitherto scarce dared to hope for.

It is of course known to all who have followed the progress of recent scientific research, that nearly all the comets which have been observed during the last score or so of years, have given under spectroscopic analysis such evidence as shows that a portion of their light comes from glowing gas. Two distinct cometic spectra have been observed—Dr. Huggins, *facile princeps* among British spectroscopists, first noted them in the case of Brorsen's comet, and of Winnecke's—each consisting of bright bands. In one case the bands have not been identified with those belonging to any known terrestrial substance; but the other and more common cometic spectrum agrees with one which has been found to be characteristic of certain compounds of carbon. "The general close agreement in all cases," writes Dr. Huggins, "notwithstanding some small divergencies, of the bright bands in the cometary light with those seen in the spectra of hydrocarbons, justifies us fully in ascribing the original light of these comets to matter which contains carbon in combination with hydrogen."

These spectra of bands had been seen so systematically from 1864, when Donati made the first rough observations of the cometic spectrum, until Wells's comet was observed a few months ago, that astronomers began to think that they would get no other information from comets. It was especially unsatisfactory that no bright or dark *lines* could be seen. For in the case of one particular class of spectroscopic observations, which seemed specially likely to give interesting information about comets, bright *bands* in the spectrum are absolutely useless. We refer to those

observations which indicate rapid motions of recession or approach, by displacements of the spectrum. Such displacement is always exceedingly small even in the case of bodies moving at the rate of twenty or thirty miles per second. It therefore cannot possibly be determined by observing a spectrum of broad bands of light, with no well-defined edges by which to recognise displacement.

But Wells's comet last spring, though it attracted no special attention from ordinary stargazers, showed for the first time a new and promising feature. This comet, which had shown the carbon bands like other comets during the first month or two of its approach towards the sun after its discovery, began, when it drew within a certain distance from him, to show evidence of the presence of glowing sodium. A few days later the pair of orange lines in the spectrum which indicate the presence of this widely distributed element, were very bright and distinct, and they continued so until the comet passed out of view from our northern heavens.

Now there was double promise in this observation. First, it showed that the changes of appearance which a comet undergoes as it draws nearer to the sun are accompanied by changes of physical condition with which the spectroscopist can deal. Secondly, as the bright lines of sodium are well defined, and as their proper place in the spectrum is known, there was promise that hereafter observations might be made to determine movements of recession or of approach which may be taking place either in different parts of the comet, or in the comet as a whole.

Let us first consider the application of spectrum analysis to determine the changes taking place in the physical condition of a comet.

It is obviously a most promising circumstance that evidence should now be attainable to show what is the real physical constitution of those different parts of a comet which present such striking changes as the comet approaches the sun. Hitherto all that has been seen has been the raising up of luminous envelopes on the side towards the sun, and the apparent sweeping away of the matter thus formed into the strange appendage called the tail. But hereafter, in the case of any comet which like Donati's (in 1858) exhibits under favourable conditions the various changes due to the increased proximity of a comet to the sun, it will be found possible to recognise by means of the spectroscopist the substances which are successively volatilised as the comet moves towards its perihelion. It may possibly be found that when a comet shows, as Donati's did, several envelopes one within the other, the luminous vapours forming these are of different substance. The constitution of the tail, too, may be found to vary as the comet changes in position. Where there are more tails than one, as in the case of Donati's comet, and of other celebrated comets, the spectroscopist may indicate varieties of physical structure and condition. Possibly, Bredichin's theory, that three different substances—iron, carbon, and hydrogen—driven from the sun with different velocities, form the several tails of such comets, may be established by the spectroscopic analysis of these appendages. It may

very probably be found, also, that even in the case of a comet with but a single tail, the physical constitution of the tail varies in different parts of its length.

But the possibility that movements in the nucleus, coma, and tail of a comet, may be detected by spectroscopic analysis, is yet fuller of promise.

Let us briefly consider the nature of this method of observation.

When we approach a point from which waves of any sort are moving, we cross the waves in more rapid succession, and the *effect* is as though they were narrowed. When, on the other hand, we recede from their source, so that the waves (moving, it is understood, more quickly than we do) overtake us, they pass us in less rapid succession, and the effect is as though they were made broader. (We speak, of course, of their width as measured from crest to crest.) We can easily see that this would be so in a sea across which waves were swiftly travelling, a stout swimmer urging his way so as either to meet them or to be overtaken by them. It has been shown, also, experimentally that this is true of sound. When we approach a source of sound, the tone is raised (or rather appears to the ear to be so, for, of course, the sound-waves on which the tone depends are not really altered), whereas when we recede from the source of sound the tone seems lowered. This observation, indeed, may readily be made by any observant person in railway travelling; for it will be noticed that whenever the whistle of a passing engine is sounded the tone falls suddenly, or seems to do so, at the moment when the engine which had been approaching begins (having passed us) to recede. In the case of light, it was long since pointed out by Doppler that a similar effect should be produced, if only the velocity of approach or recession is not too small to be appreciable when compared with the tremendous velocity of light—186,000 miles per second.* The effect would theoretically be a change of colours in the case of light really of a single pure colour. For light belonging to the red end of the spectrum is formed by waves of greater length than those which form light belonging to the violet end of the spectrum; and the various colours of the spectrum from the red to the violet end have wave-lengths gradually diminishing from the greatest length at the red end to the least length at the violet. Doppler was bold enough to hope that by this method the colours of the stars might indicate stellar movements of recession or of approach. But of that he should have seen, had he reasoned the matter aright, there was no hope or even possibility. For the light of a star contains rays of all colours from red to violet, and rays beyond the red on one side, and beyond the violet on the other, which therefore no eye can see. The only effect of any diminution of all the wave-lengths

* It may, perhaps, be of interest to some readers of the CORNHILL MAGAZINE to learn that the first matter ever written by me for the press related to this very subject and appeared as an article entitled "The Colours of the Double Stars," in the CORNHILL MAGAZINE for December, 1863.

would be that a part of the violet light would be lost as light, but its place would be taken by light from the indigo, that by light from the blue, and so on, the light from the red which became orange being replaced by rays otherwise invisible from beyond the red. And similarly (only the change would be in the other direction) in the case of an increase in all the wave-lengths.

But it was early shown (so far as I know I was the first to refer to the matter publicly, but Dr. Huggins—unknown to me—was working at the very time on the plan indicated) that the lines in the spectrum would be shifted—towards the red in the case of recession from the source of light, and towards the violet in the case of approach towards that source. This displacement can be measured—if great enough, or rather, if not too small; for, in the case of all such motions as are taking place among the stars and planets, the displacement must be very, very small indeed.

Now to comets more than to any other class of celestial bodies this method might, it would seem, be advantageously applied. For not only do comets themselves move during a part of their course around the sun with enormous velocity, but within the comet itself changes take place which seem to imply enormously rapid motions. In particular the development of the tail, although it has not been absolutely demonstrated to be due to repulsive action, yet seems explicable in no other way; and if it is thus caused, the movement of the matter forming the tail must take place with a velocity bringing it well within the application of the spectroscopic method.

But it is essential for the use of this method that the spectrum of the moving body should have well-defined and recognisable lines. Bands, such as those in the spectrum of the comets first observed, are utterly useless for this purpose. Their precise position cannot be determined so that we could be sure of any displacement due to motion. For this purpose we must have a line, which, when the spectrum is brought side by side with that of a terrestrial substance showing the same line, will be in line with this if the celestial source of light is at rest, and will be recognisably displaced towards the red or towards the blue if that luminous body is receding or approaching respectively.

So that when, last May, Wells's comet suddenly began to show the well-known lines of sodium, promise was at once, and for the first time, afforded, that the problems of cometic changes, in so far as these depend on motions taking place within the comet itself, may before long be solved. We can have very little doubt, for instance, that if such a comet as Donati's were now to appear, and to be studied under favourable conditions during those parts of its course in which it was subject to the most intense disturbing action, the bright lines which would be seen in the comet's spectrum would either by their displacement tell us that the substance of the comet is driven wildly hither and thither in the head and swept swiftly away to form the tail, as it *seems* to be,

or else, by remaining unchanged in position, would show that there are no such movements of disturbance or repulsion.

Now the comet which has recently been seen near the sun has been observed by this method. On September 18, when it was but three degrees (say half a dozen sun-breadths) from the sun on the sky, it was examined in the clear sky of Nice by M. Thollon, a skilful French spectroscopist.

The spectrum, notwithstanding the obviously unfavourable conditions under which the observation was made, showed clearly the line (or rather the double line) of sodium. Here, by the way, was at once evidence such as in former times no astronomer could have of the comet's real position in space. Formerly if a comet was observed anywhere, once only, nothing could be certainly known respecting its position, except that it was somewhere in the line of sight in which it was seen. But if we are right in believing that the sodium in a comet is only vaporised and rendered self-luminous when the comet is near the sun, then the new comet on September 18 was not only shown to lie in a certain direction, but within certain tolerably narrow limits of distance.

But Thollon observed something else, not quite so satisfactorily as to be absolutely certain of it, but still so as to give a considerable degree of assurance. He says that the line of sodium seemed displaced towards the red. This would indicate recession. Observe here again how the spectroscopic method of determining motions of recession or approach may come in to help the astronomer to determine the position of a comet. Supposing this method should ever be so improved that the exact rate of a comet's motion might be determined by it, then instead of merely ascertaining, in any single observation, the direction in which a comet lies at the moment, the astronomer may learn its direction, something (as we have seen) of its distance, and the rate at which it is moving from or towards the observer. The rate of its thwart motion cannot of course be inferred from the spectroscopic observations directly, yet indirectly it can. For the rate of motion at any given distance from the sun for an orbit of known dimensions is known; now the distance of the comet being partly indicated by the spectroscopic observations, the thwart motion is known within the same degree of error. Hence, combining this with our more precise knowledge of the motion of recession or approach, we make a first rather rough approximation to the real motion, both in direction and in amount—which would determine the orbit absolutely. Observations made a day or two later will show whether the body really is moving in this orbit; and if the later observations include spectroscopic ones we shall obtain means of testing and correcting the first estimate of the orbit which will practically give us the orbit correctly—much more correctly, at any rate, than it can be deduced by the methods at present in use from observations made on four or five different occasions.*

* Theoretically the orbit of a comet can be deduced from three observations; but practically many observations are required to give anything like accuracy.

It may be well, perhaps, in conclusion, to inquire how the comet will actually be absorbed by the sun—a fate which we may consider to be assuredly in store for it before many years, perhaps before many months, are past.

First, then, be it noticed that *at present* there is no tendency towards a diminution of the perihelion distance of the comet, as many seem to imagine. The point of nearest approach will remain nearly at the same distance from the sun, at each return of the comet, so long as the orbit remains eccentric. Only when the velocity in perihelion (or at the point of nearest approach) is so reduced that the centrifugal tendency no longer balances the centripetal force, will there be any approach towards the sun. This amounts to saying that until the orbit is transformed into a circle (when there will be no perihelion at all) there will be no approach towards the sun. When that transformation is effected, there will be approach at every part of the circuit—in other words, the course of the comet will become a spiral, the coils of which will draw closer and closer in towards the sun's surface: the sun will be within the coils, but the comet itself will be in the toils, and its end not far off. As throughout this approach the comet's substance will be in the form of vapour, there will probably be a rapidly increasing resistance, and hence a rapidly increasing rate of approach towards the sun. Oddly enough, the comet's rate of travelling will be increased notwithstanding this constant resistance, the sun's indrawing action adding more motion than the frictional resistance subtracts. For several days, probably, the comet in each circuit, when off the solar disc, will be a conspicuous object to spectroscopists, though not perhaps visible in the telescope. The comet will appear outside of the sun's disc, first on one side, then on the other, at intervals of about $1\frac{3}{4}$ hours— $3\frac{1}{2}$ hours being the time of circuit of a body close to the sun's surface. As this surface is carried round once in about twenty-five hours, there will be considerable loss of velocity, and resulting heat, in the substance of each part of the comet as it is absorbed. But I believe the whole heat of the sun would be little increased if the whole of the comet were thus absorbed at once; and very little indeed if, as is certain, the absorption take place piecemeal.

RICHARD A. PROCTOR.

A Corner of Devon.

It is a laudable rule which prescribes to preachers the choice of a single definite text as a peg whereon to hang their learned expositions and moral exhortations. The very existence of the text serves to check the evil habit of inordinate wandering from the subject, at least up to a certain point, which point it must be admitted the majority of preachers practically fix for themselves in a liberal spirit of the broadest comprehensiveness. Seeing, therefore, that it is well to talk as far as possible about one thing at a time, I am going this morning to set a text before myself with the most rigid limitations, and not to travel an inch beyond its boundaries (save by way of analogy or illustration) on any pretext whatsoever. The subject of my dissertation shall be sundry rivers, hills, towns, and villages in the southern half of Devonshire; to wit, all that portion of the county which lies between the fiftieth parallel of latitude on the north and the English Channel on the south. I am thus geographically correct in the delimitation of my boundaries, because I have laid my text bodily before me on my desk in the shape of a small local map; and I have mentally determined to speak of no town or feature which is not marked on that map in large type, in order that we may not be led away into the discussion of minute facts about unimportant places, but may keep our eyes steadily fixed on the larger elements of the county, with whose names even the intelligent stranger may be reasonably supposed to possess a superficial acquaintance. Through such selected towns and villages in South Devon I here propose to conduct a philological expedition, to which all the readers of this magazine are hereby invited, without further formalities of any sort.

The first point about the Devonian names to which we must turn our attention is the original or fixed element of the main geographical features. It may seem strange on a hasty glance that the rivers and hills of a country should have received names while the habitations of man were still nameless; yet such is undoubtedly the fact, and a little consideration will make it clear why it should be so. To the primitive savage, wandering wild in woods like the Australian black-fellow or the American Indian, the rivers and hills are permanent objects, while the hut and the wigwam are changeable and temporary. Thus in the very earliest ages the everlasting hills and the ceaseless rivers got themselves names at the hands of men; and when permanent settlements began to spring up on the slopes or in the valleys, they were usually called after the most conspicuous natural objects in their immediate neighbour-

hood. It is only modern civilised man who, with the innate vulgarity begotten of civilisation, invents ready-made names for his new towns in the bush or the backwoods—Cincinnati or Denver City, Jeffersonville or Madison Landing; and even he sometimes falls back upon the older local nomenclature of the aboriginal savage, calling Ottawa after its rushing river, Winnipeg after its frozen lake, or wild Oswego after the swamps around. But he sets out with the developed idea of a town and of a town name already firmly fixed in his stereotyped brain, and he manufactures out of his own ill-furnished head what tasteless monstrosity he can after the analogy of the familiar forms he has known in the "old country" before he crossed the intervening sea. The primitive savage and the slowly progressive barbarian, however, come at their local nomenclature by a very different process. They start with the descriptive words naturally applied to certain physical features—Red Hill or Big Water, Fontaine qui Bouille or Roche Percée (to quote the best and nearest modern analogues)—and after this central object they call their little villages, as soon as villages first begin to be. Hence, the fundamental fact in all local nomenclature is the names of hills and rivers; and these names often go back to an absolutely unfathomable antiquity, being quite meaningless in any language of which a single isolated fragment now remains to us.

In Southern Devon, this primitive stratum of place names is represented by the names of all the hills and rivers, some of which can be explained by means of the Celtic dialects, while others bear no meaning at all in any known tongue, but descend to us in all probability from those earlier neolithic inhabitants, whose polished stone weapons are still picked up among the camps of the Axe valley, and whose barrows and cromlechs still thickly stud the bare wind-swept summits of Dartmoor and Haldon. The principal rivers in this district are the Exe, the Teign, the Dart, and the Tamar; the minor streams are the Axe, the Coly, the Sid, the Otter, the Bovey, the Avon, the Erme, the Yealm, the Plym, and the Tavy, all of which flow southward; while on the north we get the Taw and a tributary of the Torridge, to wit, the Okement. These names form the nucleus of the local nomenclature in South Devon, and upon them all the later town names are ultimately based. As to the hills, though their titles are equally ancient, they have entered but little into the urban life of the county, and so the consideration of their derivatives may well be postponed till we have considered those of the main rivers.

Only two settlements in Devonshire are known with certainty to have existed in the days of the Romans, and those two are Exeter and Tamerton. Both still retain their ancient names in slightly altered forms. The river which we now know as the Exe bore on Cymric lips the title of *Isc*; that is to say, "the water." The word is the same as the familiar Irish *uisge*, which we all know in *usquebaugh* and *whisky*, two names (or rather two forms of one name) which are exactly equivalent

in meaning to *eau-de-vie*. In its purest modern shape the word *Isc*, applied to many different rivers in various parts of Britain, now survives as the *Esk* and the *Usk*. But just as on west-country tongues *ask* still becomes *ax*,* so *Isc* has often become *Exe*, *Axe*, and *Uxe*, besides affording the first half of a name to *Oxford* and *Uxbridge*. Well, the station on the *Isc*, a Celtic trading town on a *dun* overhanging the tidal head of navigation, was naturally known to the Romans as *Isca Damnoniorum*; and when in the slow western advance of the English colonists a small body of West Saxon settlers occupied *Isca* side by side with its native Welsh inhabitants, they called their new conquest *Exan-ceaster*. Thence, by a gradual declension which I have already traced, the name passed into *Execestre* and *Exeter*. As late as the days of *Athelstan*, the town still consisted of two distinct and independent burghs, an English quarter on the south, a Welsh one on the north; and the churches in the two parts are even yet dedicated (as Mr. Green points out) to Roman and Celtic saints respectively. *Athelstan* reduced the Welsh town to complete subjection; but the population of *Exeter* must always have retained a large Cymric element; while Cornish Welsh was still spoken sparsely in remote parts of the South Hams—the region between *Dartmoor* and the sea—as late as the reign of *Queen Elizabeth*.

As to the second Roman station, *Tamara*, it took shape on English lips as *Tamarton*, now *Tamerton*. Concerning this place, I shall have a little more to say under another aspect hereafter.

The *Exe*, however, has given rise to many other names besides that of *Exeter*. Close by the city, *Exwick* overhangs the river's brink. A little further down its banks, a perpendicular tower, close to the railway line, marks the mediæval survivor of that old English church from which the village takes its title of *Exminster*. On the spit of land where it falls into the sea, we get the *Exan-mutha* of the *English Chronicle*, now the fashionable modern watering-place of *Exmouth*. These are probably the three oldest settlements in the *Exe* valley, after *Exeter* itself; but in process of time, as men began to push up country among the downs and forests in the rear, they came at last to the great range of hills in which the river takes its rise; and to this they gave the name of *Exmoor*, which clearly shows the nature of the route whereby they arrived at its rearing slopes of heather-clad slate. The highest ford on the river bears the natural title of *Exford*, and a little lower down on its course lies the pretty village of *Exbridge*. Not far off is *Exton*, while minor hamlets all around are variously compounded in other fashions with the river name.

The tributary streams have equally contributed to the later village nomenclature of the county. The chief town on the *Culm* is still *Cullompton*, just as an elm is still an *ellum* in *Devonian* dialect; while

* In fact, this is the classical form in the Anglo-Saxon of *King Alfred* and his successors.

higher up its dale lies Culmstock, the termination being the same as that which elsewhere takes the form of Stoke, meaning nothing more than the very indefinite sense of "place." Uffculm, hard by, joins to the river name a last faint memorial of its forgotten early English lord, some Uffa or Offa now unknown, "caret quia vate sacro." On the little Clyst, again, we get a whole host of petty villages, any of which may represent the Glistun of the Chronicle—Clist Hydon, St. Lawrence Clist, Broad Clist, Honiton Clist, St. Mary Clist, and St. George Clist. Finally, on the Creden, we have Crediton, locally called Kurton, the oldest seat of the Devonian bishopric, concerning which the "vates sacer" has not been silent, for he sings in true west-country dialect, with more vigour than historical correctness,

Kurton was a market town
When Exon was a fuzzy down.

Not to prove tedious in my enumeration, I shall shortly lump together sundry of the other river towns in this corner of the county under a single brief list. On the Axe we have Axminster and Axmouth; on the Coly, Colyton and Colyford; on the [Sid, Sidbury, Sidford, and Sidmouth; on the Otter, Ottery St. Mary, Up-Ottery, Ven Ottery, and Otterton; on the Teign, Teignmouth, King's Teignton, Bishop's Teignton, Drewsteignton, and Teigngrace; and on the Dart, Dartmouth. In all these cases, and in many more, the only ancient element is the river name, and all the other parts are of quite comparatively modern origin. I shall proceed to show this by a consideration of their various elements.

The simplest forms of these words are those which merely take the river name, with a termination like ton or stock. Such are Otterton, Colyton, Plymton, Yealmpton, Crediton, Culmstock, Tavistock, and Plymstock. I have very little doubt that these are mere rough Anglicisations of Cymric forms equivalent to Welsh Llans or Tres. So I suspect the Axmouths, Teignmouths, and Exmouths are the analogues of Welsh Abers. In every case these simplest forms are also those of the oldest and most important towns. Ottery, again, contains the same termination as all the islands round the English coast, and means the Isle on the Otter: perhaps it represents a Welsh Ynys.* The burys and minsters are equally transparent; but the present names of the latter type can of course date no further back in time than the churches and monasteries on which they are based.

This leads us up to a second point of some importance. Originally,

* It is possible, however, that the original name of the river was Ottery, not Otter: certainly a neighbouring stream is known to this day either as Yart or as Yarty. The termination *y* or *vy* is very common in Devonian rivers, as in Tavy, Meavy, Bovey, Creden, Coly, and Woolly. Doubtless it represents the Welsh *gwy*, water, which we get as the name of the river Wye; and therefore a stream might alternatively be called either Otter or Ottery, Yart or Yarty.

I believe, at least in this land of hills and glens, men lived for the most part in scattered homesteads, and described themselves as belonging to Teign or Dart, just as in Scotland they still describe themselves as belonging to Strathspey or to Deeside. In old documents, events are said to happen, not at Lyme or Charmouth, but at the Lym and at the Char. In process of time, however, the population thickened. The river names being then common, more or less, to all the villages along each valley, it became necessary to distinguish them from one another by descriptive affixes or suffixes. In the Domesday for Devon there are three Credys, four Teigns, four Darts, eight Clists, and thirteen Otterys, which it was needful to discriminate by such means. Sometimes this was done by the mere form of the termination, as in Culmpton and Culmstock, Plympton and Plymstock, Teignton and Teignmouth; but oftener it was managed by one of two plans, the earlier by adding the name of the saint to whom the church is dedicated, the later (and for the most part subsequent to the Norman Conquest) by adding the surname of the family who held the manor. A few examples of each mode will help to show the really gradual growth of our local nomenclature.

The earliest method of ecclesiastical differentiation is that which simply puts the saint's name without any honorific prefix whatsoever. Thus on the Tavy, above Tavistock, we get Mary Tavy and Peter Tavy, respectively dedicated to St. Mary and St. Peter. A little later, however, the more respectful form of St. Lawrence Clist, St. George Clist, and St. Mary Clist came into fashion; while Norman usage afterwards transferred the saint's name to the end of the compound title, as in Ottery St. Mary, which was thus distinguished from the two other isles on the Otter, Ven Ottery, and Up-Ottery. Sometimes we have historical evidence of the change: for example, St. Neots, in Cornwall, was once known as Neotstow. Along the main rivers, these church-towns generally take the river name; but as settlements were pushed back into the uplands, and new churches founded there, the later villages often bore the saint's name alone without any other suffix save some word signifying place or hamlet. Thus we get St. Mary Church, near Torquay; St. Budeaux, near Plymouth; and St. Leonards, near Exeter. Early forms of this type, without the prefix, are Marystow, Bridestow, Virginstow, and Jacobstow, where *stow* is simply the old English word for place; while German's Week is the wick of St. Germanus, and Stoke Gabriel similarly keeps up the memory of the second among the archangels. Churchstow is yet more indefinite in form; while Christow is not, as one might imagine, the equivalent of St. Saviour's, but really recalls the dedication of its church to St. Christina. In Down St. Mary, we get the old British *dun*, in its regular Anglicised form, with the saint's name attached Norman fashion. St. Giles on the Heath tells its own tale in modern English. Whitechurch is also equally transparent. In all these cases, it is hardly needful to point out that the existing nomen-

clature could only have arisen after the first church was built in each of the respective villages.

The differentiation by means of the person or family who once owned the manor is equally common, and most of the great Devonshire houses are thus commemorated to the present day. On the Teign, for example, we get not only Kingsteignton and Bishop's Teignton (where the Bishops of Exeter had once a palace), but Teigngrace, which recalls the family of Graas, and Drewsteignton, which was owned under Henry II. by one Drogo or Drew. To begin, as is fitting, with the highest dignitaries first, among royal manors were Kingskerswell (distinguished from Abbott's Kerswell), King's Tamerton, and Kingsteignton; while the earls of Devon owned Plympton Earl (thus distinguished from Plympton St. Mary). The numerous Newtons, all of them on their very faces recent towns, were known as Newton Abbott, the property of Torre Abbey; Newton Bushell, Newton Ferrers, and Newton St. Cyres. The same great house which gave its name to one of these places reappears at Churston Ferrers, near Brixham. The most famous of all Devonian families, the Courtenays, turn up at Sampford Courtenay, so called by way of distinction from Sampford Spiney in the south. The Traceys, one of whom was among the murderers of Thomas à Becket, have left their name to Bovey Tracey on the little river Bovey, where the church (erected as an expiatory offering) is still dedicated to St. Thomas of Canterbury. North Bovey and Bovey Heathfield are the other places from which it had to be discriminated. Nymet Tracey, on the stream of the Nymet, also keeps their memory green in another part of the county. The Mohuns have left their title to Mohun's Ottery, and in a more corrupt form to Tor Moham. Tamerton Folliot, Sydenham Damarel, Berry Pomeroy, and Brampford Speke, are similar instances in the same district. Canon-teign takes the first half of its name from the Black Canons of Merton Priory, who acquired it in the thirteenth century. About Cheriton Bishop and Stoke Canon I cannot speak so confidently. Sometimes, too, the names were Latinised for legal purposes, as in Buckland Monachorum, the seat of the great abbey, so called in contradistinction to Buckland-in-the-Moor, Egg Buckland, and Buckland Tout Saints, the last an obviously Norman dedication. Zeal Monachorum is another similar case, while Monk Oakhampton tells the same story in an English dress. The parts of these words which seem as yet uncertain will be mostly explained under later headings.

It is clear that by far the larger portion of the names here considered are directly dependent upon the old Celtic or pre-Celtic river-names; and that whenever we get away from the rivers, the nomenclature begins to bear a much more modern appearance. In some cases, however, the etymological connection with the river is somewhat more obscure, and requires a little passing explanation. Thus one of the streams which flows through the South Hams bears the common Celtic title of Avon; that is to say, the *afon* or river. Upon its banks stands

the village of Awton Giffard, as people now pronounce it; but the official spelling Aveton helps us back to the original Avontun or Avonton; that is to say, Avontown. The Giffards, a well-known Devonian stock, were long lords of the manor. A more curious instance is that of Oakhampton, whose form suggests at once the analogy of Oakham in Rutland, which is certainly the town in the oak forest. But Oakhampton stands on the river Okement; and in some unpublished manumissions of serfs, entered on the fly-leaves of Bishop Leofric's missal, I find the earliest form of the town name is Ocmund-tun, that is to say, the town on the Okement. Oddly enough, while the official form has been corrupted into Oakhampton, the word on the lips of the country people has become Ockington, evidently a change due to the commonness of clan-villages bearing analogous titles. Monk Oakhampton has in like manner turned incongruously into Monk Ockington.

This instance leads on to the consideration of certain others more or less similar, where the etymology originally referred to the river, but has become obscured with the lapse of time. Torrington is a case in point. It stands on the river Torridge, but it now looks fallaciously like a colony of Teutonic Thorings or Thydings. In the South Hams, two still more interesting instances may be found. High above the Dart stands a village called Dartington, and in the valley of the Erme lies one called Ermington. Here I am inclined to suppose that the earliest English settlers did really call themselves Dartingas and Earmingas, and that the villages were named immediately after the tribes, and only indirectly after the river. Leamington in Warwickshire similarly stands on the river Leam, and there are other like cases elsewhere. It would be difficult to say whether these are true clan-settlements, or mere corruptions like Huntingdon, which was once Huntandun, and Abingdon, which was once Abbandun. Tavistock is called Tafingstoc in the "English Chronicle," as though it belonged to a tribe of Tavings; but the modern form has reasserted its true derivation from the river Tavy.

I must interpolate here, though a little out of logical order, some notice of the other real or apparent clan-settlements in this part of the county. Cockington, near Torquay, I have no doubt was a genuine colony of English Cockings. East and West Allington, near Kingsbridge, seem equally true settlements of the Allings. About Ashprington I am less certain; while Stokingham is far more likely to be a mere corruption. Shillingford St. George, however, has a good English ring about it; and so have Ilsington and Bickington in the Teign valley district. All these I take to be true old English settlements—little colonies of intrusive West Saxons, pitched here and there in the upper dales among the lands of the West Welsh or Damnonians. I am inclined to believe, too, that Honiton, a name which has much puzzled antiquaries, ultimately belongs to the same class. On the lips of the country people, as I have often observed, it is always Honington (or, to

be perfectly candid, Unnington), and it may very well once have been the primitive *tun* of the English Honingas. The change in this case would be quite analogous to that which has made Glæstingabyrig into Glastonbury, or Bensington into Benson. If so, I suppose Honiton Clist must be another settlement of the same Honingas on the river Clist, thus distinguished on the one hand from Honiton proper, and on the other hand from all the neighbouring Clists, St. Mary's, or St. George's.

To return once more to our rivers, there are yet other ways in which they have given rise to various local names. Besides Lidford on the little Lid, and Lewtrenchard on the Lew Water, we get the Taw giving origin not only to North Tawton and South Tawton, but also to Taw Head, as the name of the hill on which it takes its rise.* So the Dart supplies a title for Dartmoor as a whole, and for the hill known as Dart Head in particular. Again, the promontory between the estuary of the Teign and the sea, ending in the Ness opposite Teignmouth (ness being equivalent to nose, to the Naze, to Orford Ness, and to the last syllable in Cape Grisnez and Blancnez) is known as Teignhead; and a nestling combe among the red hills here finds a name for Combe-in-Teignhead, while a Stoke in the same district is known as Stoke-in-Teignhead. Indeed, some distinction is positively necessary to mark off one Stoke from another in this neighbourhood; for we have also Stoke Fleming (it passed from the Flemings to the Mohuns and Careys), Stoke Gabriel, Stoke Damarel, and at least half a dozen more assorted Stokes and Stocks. Even little Dawlish, that trim and artificial modern watering-place among the bright red cliffs near Teignmouth, traces its name to a Celtic river; for in the record of Bishop Leofric's gift of the manor to the church of Exeter it is spelt Doffisc, the last syllable being clearly the same as Isc and Isca. But the Dawlish Water (as we now call it) is so short a stream that no other village has arisen on its banks, so that no distinctive termination has ever been added, and we get the name in the same form as Bovey or Tavy must have had before they were differentiated into Bovey Tracey and North Bovey, or into Mary Tavy, Peter Tavy, and Tavistock. On the other hand, even the tiny valley of the Lym has had to be divided into Lyme Regis and Uplyme.

Before we pass away from the rivers, a word must be said about the name of Plymouth. This case admirably illustrates the way in which mere descriptive titles grow at last into proper names. In Domesday Book mention is made of three small hamlets on this site, known as Sutton; that is to say, South Town. One was called Sutton Prior; the two others were a brace of King's Suttons. In process of time, the last-named passed from the Crown to new lords as Sutton Ralf and

* The name properly applies to the fountain-head only, but in practical use it has come to be applied to the hill as well.

Sutton Valletort. Gradually the first of the trio got to be known as Sutton-juxta-Plym-mouth; until in the fifteenth century an Act of Parliament abolished the former name, and gave the rising port its modern title of Plymouth. Devonport is a still more recent innovation. It was known as Plymouth Dock till 1824, when the existing name was conferred upon it by Act of Parliament.

Another very ancient element in the place names of Devon is afforded by the hills and rocks of the uplands. Most of these are locally known as Tors, a Celtic word which recurs in two other very imperfectly Teutonised regions—at Glastonbury Tor in Somerset, and at Mam Tor in Derbyshire. Two isolated Tors in the more cultivable part of the county have given names to villages or towns. One is a fine broken mass of rock near Ashburton, in the parish of Tor Bryan, held by the Bryans from the days of Henry II. to those of Richard II. The other, a more famous one, is the rugged mound on the Newton Abbott road at Torquay, crowned by a ruined chapel of St. Michael, the archangel who loves such peaked and airy stations.* From this peak, the monastery at its base took the name of Tor Abbey, or, as it is now most irrationally spelt by tawdry modern vulgarisers, Torre; while the adjoining manor was known as Tor Mohun, corrupted with the course of time into Tor Moham. The blue bay in front became Torbay; and when a little quay was built in its securest corner, the new harbour was known as Torquay. Here, once more, as in the case of the rivers, all that is essential or fundamental in the names is the Celtic root Tor: the rest is nothing more than late mediæval or modern addition.

Even more ancient, perhaps, than the word Tor itself are the words with which it is conjoined in the names of the Dartmoor hills. There are people who think they can assign a meaning to Yes Tor and Mis Tor, to Cosdon and Crockern, to Hessary and Hamildon. As a rule, indeed, the less they know about philology and about Dartmoor, the more confident are they as to the correctness of their conjectural etymologies. But sober-minded inquirers, who are not content with mere baseless guessing, but consider that it is desirable to have a little evidence before deciding upon a verdict, do not find it so easy to analyse or account for these extremely ancient and primitive names. A very few of them are probably English in their first element; for example, Hey Tor is probably the high tor, or, to spell it in the older fashion, Heah Tor. A few more are possibly Welsh: for example, Hessary may perhaps just conceivably have something to do with the dimly-known Celtic deity, Hesus, and Mis Tor may perhaps be remotely connected with the equally uncertain Misor, the moon-god; though these

* In all the most Celtic districts of France and England, by the way, St. Michael is a great favourite. His churches are perched on the summits of many a sheer Auvergnat *puy*, as well as on the well-known pyramidal mounts near Dol and Penzance.

derivations certainly smack of a justly discredited school which used to talk with much learned ignorance about the details of an unknown and very problematic Druidical worship. But the greater part must be set down, like the original river names, to a suspense account, as words whose etymology cannot yet be satisfactorily recovered. They may be neolithic, they may be British, they may even be English; but the only safe thing to say about them is that nobody really knows anything at all upon the subject.

Nevertheless, the names of this early type have themselves helped to enter into the composition of other local names; and the hills which bear them have played no small part in the early history of the county. Mr. Gomme has shown that all the old hundred courts and shire moots of England were originally held in the open air; and most of them were held either at some sacred tree—the shire oak, say, or the hoar apple tree—or else at some monolithic monument, or again at some great barrow, or finally on the top of some high and conspicuous hill. Hey Tor itself thus gives the name to a Hundred; and the hundred court was long held upon its twin crests of solid granite. At Crockern Tor, the stannary parliament of Devonshire used to meet, as that of Cornwall met at Hingston Down, the Hengestesdun of the “English Chronicle,” where Egberht the West Saxon put to flight the independent Cornishmen in a famous battle. The assembled stannators sat in rude state on rough granite seats, long since removed to Prince Hall, and now ruthlessly destroyed, apparently for road metal. The village of Sheepstor takes its present corrupt name from a great hill in its rear, with a cavern still haunted by the native pixies; whatever the first syllable means, it does not mean sheep, for it is always found in connection with very barren and rocky heights. Buckland-in-the-Moor, Widecombe-in-the-Moor, and Moreton Hampstead are called rather after the moor as a whole, not after any one of its component undulations. Torcross, Bramble Torr, and other like names may be left for the judicious reader to decipher easily on his own account.

There is a still older crop of town names, however, than those of the river valleys—a class belonging originally to the very ancient hill-forts, many of which are now quite deserted, while the sites of others are only occupied by ruined castles or petty modern hamlets. Some of these towns date back to an immemorial neolithic antiquity; others probably descend to us from the historical Damnonian Britons. They are marked for the most part by the occurrence in their names of the root *burg* or *bury*, which means originally a mound or earthwork. In modern times, this root has differentiated itself (as Mr. Herbert Spencer would say) into two forms: one, which appears as Barrow or Berg, meaning a hill or height; the other, which appears as Burg, Burgh, Bury, and Borough, meaning rather a town or city. But in their origin, the two forms are one and the same. The root notion appears to be that of earthwork. Now a pile of earth may be an artificial tumulus or

Barrow; it may be a natural hill or Berg; it may gird round a fortress or Bury; or it may guard a trading town or Borough. Whether the idea of high place or of digging is the more primitive it would be hard to say; for all barrows, all buries, all forts, and all earthworks were originally perched on the tops of hills; but, as in most other cases, we may take it for granted that the artificial objects gained a name first, and that the name was afterwards extended to the natural eminences. For man always finds the earliest words to designate the products of his own handicraft: he made bows before he named the rainbow, and he dug burgs before he named the iceberg. The old English forms of the word are generally *burh*, genitive *byryg* for a town, and *beorg* for a hill. These forms will readily account for the various modifications which the words have undergone in various English and Lowland Scotch dialects.

The form Borough, applied to a hill, or natural height, occurs but rarely in England, as at Ingleborough in the Pennine range, and again at Flamborough in Yorkshire, and at Crowborough in Sussex. But in these last two cases, the application of the word seems so curious to modern Englishmen that they have altered the names to Flamborough Head and Crowborough Beacon, while the original words themselves are now taken to indicate the modern villages of Flamborough and Crowborough, which have grown up at their bases. This, as we shall see hereafter, is exactly analogous to what has happened with the Devonshire Burgs. An isolated barrow near Lynton is still known as Symonsborough, and said to cover the body of a king called Symon. Other forms of the root are found at Barrow-in-Furness, and at Barrow Hill, near Bath, a natural oolitic height, which closely resembles an artificial tumulus. At Bury in Lancashire, and at Bury St. Edmunds, we get the more strictly urban variation, which reappears as a termination in Canterbury, Aylesbury, Banbury, and Sudbury. Gainsborough and Scarborough show rather the north-eastern or strictly Anglian type. In Scotland, they still adhere more closely to the ancient spelling and pronunciation in Roxburgh, Jedburgh, Edinburgh, and Musselburgh. Which of these were originally hill-forts, and which were mere boroughs, it would be difficult in every case to decide: for my own part, like the undergraduate who was asked to name the minor prophets, I decline to make invidious distinctions.

Now, in Devonshire, there is a remarkable series of such burys, all of them old hill-fortresses, sometimes now quite deserted, and sometimes overhanging a modern village of the same name. These names are all of a very ancient type, and very few of them can be fairly explained by means of English roots. They consist, apparently, of an ancient name, followed by the formative English suffix, *burh*. Among the unoccupied sites are Prestonbury, a great hill-fort crowning a heath-clad slope beside the Teign at Fingle Bridge; Hembury, a huge agger overhanging the grounds of Buckfast Abbey; a second Hembury among the hills in the

rear of Honiton; and Woodbury, on the downs back of Newton Poppleford (so called from its pebbly ford, for pebbles are still always popples in Devon, and these particular pebbles are geologically famous, as well as objects of curiosity from their oval shape). But when a village has afterwards grown up under the shadow of the hill-fort, as at Musbury, Membury, Sidbury, Cadbury, and many other Devonian Burys, the original application of the words to the deserted forts has been wholly forgotten, and the villages now bear the simple name, while the forts are known as Musbury Castle, Membury Castle, Sidbury Castle, and so forth. To the best of my knowledge, however, there is not a single Bury in our present district of Devonshire which does not stand immediately below a large and conspicuous prehistoric earthwork; though at Modbury and Bigbury the traces left of the old fortifications are extremely slight. Ugborough, on the other hand, owes its name apparently to the great hill behind it, which is no doubt the original Borough, though it is now known as Ugborough Beacon. The root form is probably Celtic (or at least not English), since it reappears as a river name in Ugbrook. All these old hill-forts, of course, belong naturally to a far earlier age than the valley towns: they represent the days when each tribe of dalesmen had its own camp of refuge on the summit of the downs, whither all the women and cattle were driven in case of hostile invasion from the next glen beyond the border. The English settlers apparently took the old names in their entirety, simply adding to them the English termination Bury, instead of the Welsh affixes, Caer and Dinas.

The word Bury is now practically pronounced Berry, and in Devonshire it is often written so as well. Thus the great shining promontory whose tall cliffs bound the blue expanse of Torbay to southward is capped by a Roman camp, on the site of a still earlier British earthwork, and it is known as Berry Head, a name exactly equivalent to Pendennis in Cornwall; for Pen-dinas also means the castle headland. On the summit of Dartmoor itself, an ancient pound or piece of cyclopean masonry bears the analogous name of Berry Pound. And on a precipitous height near the vale of the Dart at Totnes, rises a mound which must long have passed by the simple title of Berry; a place chosen for a fort by the earliest autochthones, and ever afterwards crowned by a stockaded village, a Norman castle, or a Tudor mansion. From the great Norman house of the Pomeroyes it took its full modern name of Berry Pomeroy, though it was their successors, the Seymours, who raised the vast pile which still spreads its ivy-bound ruins over the summit of the precipitous slope. Warberry Hill at Torquay preserves the same local form of the word: its analogues elsewhere are always spelt Warbury.

If we review the whole of these Devonian names in our minds as here set forth, it is quite clear that they fall naturally into two great classes. One class dates from before the English Conquest, and includes all the

main natural features, the Exe and the Teign, the Tors and the Duns, besides all the older hill villages, the Memburys and Musburys, and all the known Roman stations, the Exeters and Tamertons, the Duriums and the Moridunums. In every case, these have still retained under more or less altered guises their original names. The other class dates later than the English Conquest, and consists partly of what we may fairly consider mere translations from the Cornish Welsh, such as Mary Tavy and St. Petrox; partly of specialised forms from the old river names, such as Plympton and Dartmouth; partly of purely modern names, such as Kingswear and Devonport. In every case, whatever is demonstrably old is Celtic or pre-Celtic; while conversely whatever is English is demonstrably new, and for the most part very new indeed.

In two previous papers I have endeavoured to show that all the old names in Britain were not destroyed at the English Conquest, as is commonly asserted, but lived on uninterruptedly till the present day. In this paper I have attempted to prove the obverse fact, that the English element in the local nomenclature does not really date from the earliest period of English Conquest, but is part of a slow growth, mostly in the distinctly Mediæval period. The local nomenclature was not wholly changed by the Teutonic settlers, as is so often thoughtlessly asserted: on the contrary, it was not even appreciably altered. A few new terminations were added, a few old forms were phonetically corrupted, a few transparent words were naïvely translated, and that was all. The truly English names grew up later, and they grew up just in proportion as new settlements were projected into the great waste of the forest-clad or heath-covered uplands. They are unknown in the old Celtic or Roman stations; they are fairly common in the upper valleys of the rivers; they are almost universal in the outlying downs. Yet there is still scarcely a single village name in Devonshire which does not contain for its chief distinctive and fundamental element a Celtic river root.

Again, I have chosen Devonshire for this illustrative purpose, because it is universally admitted even by the most fire-eating Teutonists of them all that the Devonian population remains to the present day mainly Welsh by race. But the Devonian nomenclature is just as English as that of any other English shire—no more so and no less. Therefore, it does not at all follow that because the local nomenclature of Kent and Norfolk is equally English, all the ancient Britons in the eastern belt were eaten alive by that redoubtable friend of Mr. Freeman, the omphagous Teutonic colonist. Everywhere over England the same results show themselves on a careful scrutiny. All the old towns, all the rivers, all the hills retain their Celtic or Romanised names: all the newer villages bear purely English names, or else names compounded of a Celtic root with a formative English termination. But if we compare the local nomenclature of Devon with that of Cornwall, we shall see at once the true *rationale* of this peculiarity. In Cornwall there are plenty of Anglicised names like Falmouth and Callington, St. Germans and

Padstow, Launceston and Grampound; but the mass of the smaller villages are known by truly Celtic titles such as Landewednack and Polperro, Trecarrel and Pengelly, Porthleven and Lostwithiel. The reason for the difference is obvious: in Devonshire, the Cymric tongue died out rapidly, so that English was the only language spoken in the greater part of the county when most of its villages first grew up: in Cornwall, the native dialect lingered on up to the last century, so that almost every place had a fixed name of its own long before English became the spoken language of the county at all. Even there, however, the Anglicising tendency is fully seen in the modern form given to many old names like St. Ives and Wadebridge, the Dead Man and the Merry Maidens, Helston and St. Michael's Mount; while the railway system has covered the map with English New Quays, Bodmin Roads, and Victorias, which in the course of ages may grow to oust the Penryns and Mevagisseys of the older language. But to say that the English conquest of Britain totally changed the names of places throughout all England, on the strength of the comparatively late Tons and Worths and Bridges, is as unhistorical as to say that Athelstan's subjugation of Cornwall gave rise to the names of Wenford Bridge or Scorrier Gate. The truth is, the more we examine the underlying stratum of English place names, the more do we see that their permanent and ultimate elements are all Celtic, while only their formative or very modern elements are in any way Teutonic or English.

A Gaelic Helen.

I THINK it may be useful, or at least curious, to make a critical examination of the character of the heroine of one of the old Gaelic legends. These tales have long been known to the British—or at least to the Anglo-Irish—public, in fragments all more or less disfigured by false taste, bad translation, detestable imitations of the brogue, and unwarrantable interpolations supposed to be comic. Many of them have lately been made accessible to English readers in a work of a very different character—Mr. Joyce's *Old Celtic Romances*, in which an attempt has been made—and, upon the whole, not unsuccessfully—to convey the spirit of the Gaelic originals in simple but classical English. But, so far as I am aware, there has been as yet little serious endeavour to treat the heroes of these tales critically, or to examine the characters portrayed as if they were the personages of a modern work of history or fiction.

The tale whose heroine I select for this purpose is the story of Diarmuid and Grainne. It has been printed, with a faithful literal translation and notes, by that distinguished Irish scholar, Mr. S. H. O'Grady, in the "Transactions of the Ossianic Society;" and his text and translation have recently been published in an uncommonly cheap form by the "Society for the Preservation of the Irish Language." The reader will therefore be in a position to check my assertions, and test the value of my inferences.

All my quotations will be made from Mr. O'Grady's admirable translation.

The fame of Grainne and of Diarmuid is over the two Gaelic countries. Wherever in Ireland or in Scotland the Gaelic language is still spoken, there the story of the two lovers is remembered, and their adventures related in the winter evenings by the fireside.

In this respect, indeed, as Mr. O'Grady has well pointed out, the mythic and semi-historical legends of ancient Erin have the advantage over the more recent traditions. Of these latter the fame is now merely local, and, so to say, anecdotal. With the appearance of the English upon the scene, the solidarity of the Gaelic races seems to have been dissolved. The O'Briens are, indeed, remembered in Clare, and the O'Donnells in Donegal, and the Butlers and Fitzgeralds in Leinster. But who speaks now of the conflicts of these worthies out of their own districts? On the other hand, where is there an Irish-speaking peasant who has not heard tell of Fionn Mac Chumhaill, and Oisín, and Oscar, and Diarmuid, and the other heroes of the Fenian tales?

Unfortunately, however, though these personages and their exploits

are well and universally remembered, there is no such general agreement as to the places where those exploits were performed. Each tribe seems to have been anxious to associate with its own mountains and valleys and streams the doughty deeds of these favourite heroes. As the anonymous author of that pleasantly learned book, *Loch Etive, and the Sons of Uisnach*, says, "no story is more persistently told than the story of Diarmuid; no story has the places connected with every transaction more minutely given; but, unfortunately, some half-dozen places claim the originals."

According to Irish tradition, and the Irish manuscripts—of which, however, there are no copies now known to exist of date later than the eighteenth century—all the adventures, with one exception, took place in Ireland. Diarmuid was a native either of Kerry or of Leinster; the place of his death was Beann Gulbain (now Ben Bulbin in Sligo); he was buried on the banks of the Boyne: and to this day, in many parts of Ireland, the ancient cromlechs (by some supposed to have been altars or places of sacrifice, but by O'Curry unhesitatingly pronounced to be merely tombs) are wont to be called by the peasantry, "Leabaca Dhiarmuda agus Ghrainne," "beds of Diarmuid and Grainne," and are supposed to have been the resting-place of the lovers.

On the other hand, Scotch tradition—which, however, is quite unsupported by manuscript testimony—would have the adventures of this romantic pair take place in some part (it is by no means settled what part) of Scotland. There is a Ben Gulbain in Perthshire, whose claim to have witnessed the death of Diarmuid is vouched for by the oldest inhabitant. In Argyll there is another Ben Gulbain, equally well recommended; and, what is more, there is in the latter county, at the upper end of Lochnell, a tall stone pillar ("one of the finest in Scotland," says the author whom I have last quoted), which goes by the name of "Diarmuid's pillar," and under which the hero is locally believed to lie buried.

The truth is that these old stories are not the property of either Scotland or Ireland in particular; they belong to the whole Gaelic race. Our geographical conception of nationality is very modern. The names "Irishman" and "Scotchman" are merely newspaper terms, of convenient use in political and theological controversy. There was a time, be it remembered, when there was no John Knox, and when John Bull himself was merely an awful possibility of the future, vaguely contemplated by certain amorous Low Dutchmen, who were coming to think that even Welsh wives would be better than no wives at all. In those days, and long after, there were neither "Irishmen," nor "Scotchmen." In their place were the "Gaedhel of Eire and of Alba." These were, in their own opinion at least, one people, broken up into a thousand clans. Unhappily they are one people no longer. Opposed systems of piety and of politics, with a marked difference of accents, and a notable distinction in whiskies, have put bad blood between the two branches of "the sea-divided Gael."

The story of Diarmuid and Grainne—in common with the other Fenian tales and poems—is undoubtedly of great antiquity. It relates to a time anterior to the introduction of Christianity. How long it may have passed—as it passes now—from sire to son by oral tradition, and when it was first written down, are questions which it is now impossible to answer. As I have already stated, no ancient copies of it are known to exist. But it is one of the 187 stories mentioned in the *Book of Leinster*, the oldest with one exception—viz.—*Book of the Dun Cow*—of the Gaelic manuscripts which we now possess.

It will be observed that I write “Diarmuid” and “Grainne,” and, when I have had to employ a phrase which involves the use of the inflected case, “Dhiarmuda” and “Ghrainne.”

The fact is, that “Diarmuid” and “Grainne” are the names of these lovers. This is how they are written in Gaelic. The English reader must please himself as to how he will pronounce them. Hitherto, for his supposed accommodation (but I don't think it helped him much), it has been the custom to corrupt these and all other Irish names in ways as various as they are absurd. Diarmuid has been set to half a dozen spellings for the Saxon ear. Sometimes he appears as *Dermat*, sometimes as *Dermod*, sometimes as *Dirmid*. The modern National School Diarmuid of Kerry or Donegal goes a step further in his desire to ingratiate himself with his conquerors, and is wont invariably, when speaking English, to designate himself either as Darby or as Jeremiah. Grainne, in like manner, goes into English society under many disguises. Mr. Joyce speaks of her as “Grania,” and she is often to be seen under the still more uncouth appearance of “Grawnya.” Nowadays, when using the English tongue, she generally calls herself “Grace,” in defiance of all etymology.

Grainne ni Mhaille, the Connaught princess who visited Queen Elizabeth, after having borne many a grotesque alias—as, for example, “Grania Uaile,” “Grany i Mallye”—appears at length to have settled down comfortably in history as “Grace O'Malley.”* Fionn Mac Chumhail is usually known as Finn Macool. Mr. Joyce translates him, curtails him, teaches him to drop his *h*'s, and turns him out, “Finn, the son of Cumal.” Macpherson crushes him into “Fingal,” and expands his famous son “Oisín” into “Ossian.” I protest against the practice altogether. Are we to turn “Napoléon” into “Nappolayong,” or Anglicise him “Napier” or “Nathaniel,” in order to popularise the account of the battle of Waterloo? It may be true enough that if you write a Gaelic name as it is written in Gaelic, no Englishman is likely to pronounce it correctly. But what of that? How many Englishmen can pronounce “Richelieu”?

* The very curious subject of the metamorphoses and so-called “translations” of Irish personal names has been treated at length by me in an article which appeared in the *Month* magazine for November 1881.

Having made these necessary observations, let me now introduce the lady whom I have kept waiting so long.

Grainne, the daughter of Cormac,* the son of Art, the son of Conn of the Hundred Battles, may well be described as the Helen of Ancient Erin, or at least as one of the Helens.

To speak of Fionn's sixteen years' "pursuit of Diarmuid and Grainne" in the same breath as the siege of Troy may indeed be to compare small things with great. The charms of Grainne, though doubtless as irresistible, were, it must be admitted, somewhat less baleful in their effects than those of her Greek prototype. To Grainne it was not given to set two nations by the ears. Her bright eyes did execution only upon her own countrymen. Still in a small, and so to speak domestic, way, she wrought about as much mischief as any lady, going into love with a light heart, could reasonably desire; causing a good deal of blood to flow, and sending the souls of many brave men to Hades. A notable woman of her kind, evidently; yet her kind is not uncommon. We all know the pretty, petty, sensitive, capricious, strongly emotional, but really heartless woman, whose end there is no possibility of foretelling, who is just as likely to make a great match as a great scandal, and die a duchess, or a castaway, or both. Such, in my humble judgment, was Grainne. Such, however, is not the opinion of her which the reader will form from Mr. Joyce's version of the tale in *Old Celtic Romances*. But Mr. Joyce, if I may venture to say so, in his graceful paraphrase has been more concerned to tell a pretty story than to follow the Irish text that lay before him. He interpolates a good deal of matter in the way of comment, reflection, and excuse, for which I can find no justification; and he rejects altogether, for reasons which he considers sufficient, the concluding chapter of the story as usually told, which chapter is certainly not to Grainne's credit.

Let me relate now how Grainne came to be the wife of Diarmuid, and what followed, so far as is necessary to enable the reader to form an estimate of the lady's character.

Well, then, we are told that when that famous warrior, Fionn Mac Chumhaill, commander of the Fenian Militia of Erin, was well stricken in years, he had the misfortune to lose his wife. In his loneliness he complained to his son Oisín, the father of Oscar, and to Diorraing, one of his friends.

"And what forceth thee to be thus?" asks Oisín; "for there is not a wife nor a mate in the green-landed island Erin, upon whom thou mightest turn the light of thine eyes, or thy sight, whom we would not bring by fair means or foul to thee."

Hereupon Diorraing † says that he thinks he knows of a lady that might suit.

* Cormac, according to the Irish annals, reigned from 213 to 253 A.D.

† Mr. Joyce calls him Dering. See the evils of the pernicious system of cooking Irish names for the English market. There is a Kentish family of Derings, baronets, never connected with Fenianism ancient or modern.

“Who is she?”

“She is Grainne, the daughter of Cormac, the son of Art, the son of Conn of the Hundred Battles,” quoth Diorraing; “that is the woman that is fairest of feature and form and speech of the women of the globe together.”

Now it so happened that there was a feud between the families of Cormac and Fionn. Hence Fionn did not like to urge his suit in person until he had some reason to think it would be accepted. Accordingly he asked Oisín and Diorraing to go as his ambassadors to Cormac. “I could better bear a refusal given to you than to myself,” said the old man.

Oisín and Diorraing therefore set out for Teamhair (now Tara), where King Cormac was holding his court. When Cormac had been made acquainted with the object of their coming, “he spoke, and it is this he said: ‘There is not a son of a king, or of a great prince, or of a hero, or a battle-champion, in Erin, to whom my daughter has not given refusal of marriage, and it is on me that all and every one lay the reproach of that; and I will not certify you any tidings, until you betake yourselves before my daughter, for it is better that ye get her own tidings, than that ye be displeased with me.’”

They proceeded accordingly to the bower of the women, and “Cormac sat him upon the side of the couch by Grainne, and said: ‘Here are, O Grainne, two of the people of Fionn Mac Chumhaill coming to ask thee as wife and as mate for him, and what answer wouldst thou give them?’”

Grainne replies dutifully, but apparently without giving much attention to the matter: “If he be a fitting son-in-law for thee, why should not he be a fitting husband and mate for me?”

To reconcile this answer with the lady’s subsequent behaviour, we must assume that at this time Grainne had never seen Fionn. This is not merely quite possible, but extremely probable. There was, as has already been said, feud between the two families. That the fame of a warrior so renowned as was Fionn must have reached her in some form or other, is of course certain. But at no time have young ladies taken much interest in contemporary public affairs, and it is in the highest degree likely that Grainne may have had but a very vague idea of what manner of man Fionn was.

The messengers, having been treated royally by Cormac, return to Fionn and acquaint him with the success of their embassy, and bid him and his followers to feast at Teamhair a fortnight hence, when the contract between him and Cormac is to be ratified.

Accordingly, on the appointed day, Fionn and all the Fenians arrive at Teamhair, and there a great banquet is spread for them in the “king’s mirthful house, called Miodhchuarta,” where the “King of Erin sat down to enjoy drinking and pleasure with his wife at his left shoulder, and Grainne at her shoulder, and Fionn Mac Chumhaill at the king’s

right hand," and the rest of the company, "each according to his rank and patrimony, from that down."

Now, near Grainne, there sat a "Druid and a skilful man," to wit, "Daire of the Poems;" and he "sang to her the songs and the verses and the sweet poems of her fathers and of her ancestors," and "it was not long before there arose gentle talking and mutual discourse between himself and Grainne."

The lady, it is clear, cared more for gossip than for poetry and genealogy; and, having now seen Fionn, she was by no means pleased with her hasty engagement to marry him.

"'Tis a great marvel to me," said she to her neighbour, "that it is not for Oisín that Fionn asks me, for it were fitter to give me such as he, than a man that is older than my father."

"Say not that," said the Druid; "for were Fionn to hear thee, he himself would not have thee, neither would Oisín dare to take thee"

Turning gracefully from so dangerous a topic, the lady began next to inquire the names of the assembled guests.

"Tell me, now," says she to Daire, "who is the warrior at the right shoulder of Oisín the son of Fionn?"

"Yonder," said the Druid, "is Goll Mac Morna, the active, the war-like."

"Who is that warrior at the shoulder of Goll?"

"Oscar, the son of Oisín," said the Druid.

"Who is that graceful-legged man at the shoulder of Oscar?"

"Caoilte Mac Ronain," said the Druid.

"Who is that freckled, sweet-worded man with the curling, dusky-black hair and the red ruddy cheeks, upon the left hand of Oisín the son of Fionn?"

"That is Diarmuid O'Duibhne the white-toothed, of the lightsome countenance, that is the best lover of women and of maidens in the whole world."

So she goes on. Then at last she sends her handmaid for her "jewelled golden-chased goblet," which "contains the drink of nine times nine men," and in which apparently some opiate has been mixed or charm breathed. It is passed round among the company, and except Oisín and Oscar, Diarmuid and Diorraing, all drink of it; and scarcely have they done so, when they "fall into a stupor of sleep and of deep slumber."

Then Grainne arose softly and went over to Oisín, and whispered to him, "I marvel at Fionn Mac Chumhaill that he should ask such a wife, for it were fitter for him to give me my own equal to marry than a man older than my father."

"Say not so, O Grainne," quoth Oisín.

"Wilt thou receive courtship from me, O Oisín?" asked this girl of the period.

"I will not," said Oisín; "for whatever woman is betrothed to Fionn, I would not meddle with her."

Then Grainne turned her face to Diarmuid O'Duibhne, and it is this she said to him, "Wilt thou receive courtship from me, O son of O'Duibhne, since Oisín receives it not from me?"

"I will not," said Diarmuid.

"Then," said Grainne, "I put thee under magic *geasa* * of danger and of destruction, if thou take me not out of this house to-night, ere Fionn and the King of Erin arise out of that sleep."

Up to this point, at any rate, I think it will be admitted that Diarmuid does not appear to have been very much taken with Grainne. "Diarmuid na m-ban" as he was called—"Diarmuid of the women"—was indeed famous as a ladies' man all over Ireland. But, though he had been accustomed to make love with some success, it was doubtless a new sensation to him to have love made to him.

"Evil bonds are those under which thou hast laid me, O woman," said he; "and wherefore hast thou laid those bonds upon me, before all the sons of kings and of high princes, in the king's mirthful house to-night, seeing that there is not, of all those, one less worthy to be loved by a woman than myself?" Then Grainne—who, it will be remembered, did not know the man by sight a few minutes ago—begins to think that she must invent something sentimental to say to him in the hope that it may provoke his ardour. She remembers that there had been some time before at Tara a hurling match, in which it was said that Diarmuid O'Duibhne had distinguished himself. So she makes this pretty speech:—

"By thy hand, O son of O'Duibhne, it is not without cause that I have laid these bonds on thee, as I will now tell thee. Of a day when the King of Erin was presiding over a great gathering and muster on the plain of Teamhair, and there arose a great hurling match between Cairbre Lifeachair and the son of Lughaidh, and the game was going against the son of Lughaidh, thou didst rise and stand, and tookest his *camán* † from the next man to thee and didst throw him to the ground, and thou wentest into the game, and didst win the goal three times upon Cairbre and the warriors of Teamhair; and I was at that time in my Grianan ‡ of the clear view, gazing upon thee; and I turned the light of mine eyes and of my sight upon thee that day, and I never gave that love to any other man from that time to this, and I will not for ever."

* *Geasa*, according to Dr. O'Grady's note, were of two kinds. They might merely amount to the putting of a man upon his honour, in which case they were called "*Geasa* which true heroes endure not without obeying;" or, as in the case of those laid by Grainne upon Diarmuid, they might be enforced by threats of supernatural punishment.

† *Camán*, the species of crooked bat with which the game was played. "Hockey stick" as we should say now.

‡ *Grianan*, from *Grian* the Sun, a name originally applied to the sunny side of the house appropriated to the use of the ladies of the family—derivately a "pleasure house," a "palace." In the corrupted Anglicised form, *Grennan*, it is now applied to half the ruined castles in Ireland.

It is to be conjectured that Oisín, if he heard this speech, must have been rather staggered, and must have congratulated himself upon having had the presence of mind to refuse the offer of marriage which the lady had made to him within the quarter of an hour.

But Diarmuid, strange to say, is not yet conquered.

"It is a wonder that thou shouldst give to me that love instead of to Fionn," said he, "seeing that there is not in Erin a man that is fonder of a woman than he; and knowest thou, O Grainne, that on the night that Fionn is in Teamhair, he it is that has the keys of Teamhair, and so we cannot leave the town?"

"There is a wicket-gate to my Grianan," said the eager maid.

"I am under *geasa*," said Diarmuid, driven to bay, "not to pass through any wicket-gate whatsoever."

But Grainne is not to be denied.

"Howbeit," said she, "I hear that every warrior and battle-champion can pass by the shafts of his spears, in or out, over the rampart of every fort and of every town, and I will pass out by the wicket-gate and thou follow me so."

Then Grainne went her way out, and Diarmuid took counsel with his friends what he should do. They advised him that he was bound to fulfil the *geasa* that had been laid upon him, though his death would result from it.

Then he went away, not exactly like a bridegroom to a feast, but with a tear "not bigger than a smooth crimson whortleberry" in each eye through grief at parting from his people. He went to the top of the fort, "and put the shafts of his two javelins under him, and rose with an airy, very light, exceeding high, bird-like leap, until he attained the breadth of his two soles of the beautiful grass-green earth on the plain without, and Grainne met him."

He determined to make a last effort to bring her to reason. "I trow, O Grainne," said he, "that this is an evil course upon which thou art come. It were better for thee to have Fionn Mac Chumhail for lover than myself, since I know not what nook or corner or remote part of Erin I can take thee to now. So return again to the town, and Fionn will never learn what thou hast done."

"It is certain that I will not go back," said Grainne, "and that I will not part from thee until death part thee from me."

Here in *Old Celtic Romances* Mr. Joyce interposes with the statement that "Now at last *Dermot* yielded and strove no longer, and, putting off his sternness of manner and voice, spoke gently to the princess, and said, 'I will hide my thoughts from thee no more, *Grania*' (I venture to think he had been fairly outspoken for a polite Irishman); 'I will be thy husband, all unworthy of thee as I am, and I will guard thee and defend thee to the death against *Finn* and his hirelings.'"

A pretty and appropriate speech, no doubt. But neither in Mr.

O'Grady's text nor translation can I discover any evidence that Diarmuid ever made it. All I find him saying in answer to Grainne's refusal to go back is, "'Then go forward, O woman,' said Diarmuid."

That he had not quite "yielded" yet, or put off altogether, as Mr. Joyce would have us believe, his "sternness of manner and voice," is furthermore, I venture to think, to be inferred from what occurred a few minutes later. They had not gone but a little way from the town when dainty Grainne, like the fine lady that she was, began to feel faint. Doubtless she thought the affectation was pleasing.

"Indeed, I am weary, O son of Duibhne," said she.

"It is a good time to weary, O Grainne," replied Diarmuid; "and return now to thine own household again, for I plight the word of a true warrior that I will never carry thee nor any other woman to all eternity."

Truly a sensible, but hardly a very sentimental, utterance on the part of the gentleman.

The lady now suggests the theft of her father's horses which are feeding in a neighbouring field, and with their aid she finally succeeds in carrying off her lover.

It does not come within the scope of my intention, nor would my space permit me, to follow Diarmuid and Grainne in the adventures which they pursued for many years all over Ireland. To detail the marvellous exploits and the wonderful escapes which are set down at full length in the *Pursuit of Diarmuid and Grainne* would lead me far from my purpose, which is merely to portray the character of this Gaelic Helen, as I have ventured to call her.

Let it suffice to say that in all these wanderings they were hot pressed by the power and jealous rage of Fionn, who summoned all the forces at his command to effect their capture and destruction.

From these straits Diarmuid always comes out well, and Grainne, to my thinking, usually badly. He is invariably brave, chivalrous, and high-minded. She is ever full of whims and fancies (especially at times when ladies, I believe, consider themselves privileged to indulge vain longings), and her whims usually imply peril for her husband or somebody else.

For some time she has an attendant, a youth named Muadhan, whose business it is to carry her on her journeys. Poor Muadhan may be supposed to have had enough to do, for she has a knack of being "weary" at inconvenient times. But it is the spirit, not the flesh, that is weak in her. In reality, with all her airs and affectation, she is a stout, healthy lass; and when Muadhan left them, "and she considered that she had now no man to carry her but Diarmuid, she took heart and began to walk boldly by Diarmuid's side."

Except in the matter of refusing to carry her, in which doubtless he is influenced by a proper sense of marital dignity, Diarmuid never denies her anything. Though he was undoubtedly in the first instance (let

Mr. Joyce gloss over the matter as he pleases) carried off by her against his will and better judgment, her charms soon appear to have acquired over him an influence such as female charms of a certain sort, if history is to be trusted, have ever been wont to acquire over the hearts of heroes. A hero he was unquestionably, of the noblest type—brave, even to recklessness, mighty in battle, terrible to his enemies, kind and considerate to his friends, tender and loving to his wife. When he is hard beset in the palisade of Doire dha bhoth by Fionn and all the power of the Fenians, he will not make his escape by the carelessly kept door which is nominally guarded by his old friends Oisín and Oscar, though they call to him to do so, and that they will look another way. “No,” says he, “I will not, for I will not cause Fionn to be angry with you for well-doing to myself.” He chooses for his escape the other door in front of which is his bitter enemy Fionn with four hundred hirelings, who call out to him “We bear thee no love, and if thou wilt come out to us we will cleave thy bones asunder.” “I pledge my word,” says he, “it is by this door I will go out.”

So in regard to his treatment of his wife. Danger is the breath of life to him, but she is never allowed to encounter peril. When foes compass them around, his first thought is always for Grainne; and his friend Aonghus of the Boyne, the famous sorcerer, is at once summoned to carry her off—rendered insensible by magical means—to a place of safety. But for himself he trusts to his two spears, the *Ga dearg* and the *Ga buidhe*, and to his swords, the *Moraltach* and the *Beagaltach*. Such a thorough gentleman is he that when, at Grainne’s request and to gratify an absurd whim of hers, he encounters and slays the Searbhan Lochlannach, the terrible giant who guards the berries of the Quicken tree of Dubhros, he hurriedly hides the monster’s mangled body under the brushwood of the forest so that Grainne may not see it.

This incident of the berries of Dubhros is so characteristic of the disposition of the two lovers, but especially of Grainne, that I must notice it at greater length. These berries of the Quicken tree of Dubhros are indeed wonderful berries. “There is in every berry of them the exhilaration of wine and the satisfying of old mead, and whoever shall eat three berries of them, has he completed a hundred years he will return to the age of thirty years.” They are guarded by the Searbhan Lochlannach, “a giant hideous and foul to behold,” who “cannot be slain until three terrible strokes be struck upon him of an iron club that he has, and that club is thus—it has a thick ring of iron through its end and round the giant’s body.”

Now it so happened that Cumhall, the father of Fionn, had been slain in battle by one Goll Mac Morna. Afterwards come the children of Morna—three doughty warriors—to Fionn, seeking peace. “I will not grant ye peace,” said Fionn, “till ye give me *Eric* for my father.” “What *Eric*?” say they. “Either the head of Diarmuid O’Duibhna, or a handful of the berries of the Quicken tree of Dubhros,” replies

Fionn. The children of Morna accordingly go off to Diarmuid and explain to him that either he must get them a handful of the berries, or be prepared to fight for his head.

Diarmuid declares that to get the berries is impossible for anybody, and that he, especially, would be the last to make the attempt, since the giant has treated him very well, and given him leave to hunt in his district. But he goes on to say that although, for these reasons, unwilling to meddle with the giant, he is quite willing to tackle the three children of Morna; and accordingly he does tackle them with his bare hands, and, after a desperate combat, conquers and binds the three of them.

Grainne has been present all this time. She has full notice that to get the berries of the Quicken tree of Dubhros is no trifle. So she turns to Diarmuid and says, "I shall not live if I taste not those berries. I vow that I will never lie in thy bed unless I get a portion of them."

Well, Diarmuid is a lover and a hero; so he goes forth to meet the Searbhan Lochlannach. He finds the monster sleeping, but he is far too noble to take him at such disadvantage. He dealt him a stroke of his foot, so that the giant raised his head and gazed at Diarmuid. "Is it that thou wouldst fain break peace, O son of O'Duibhne?" "I may not do thee treachery," replied Diarmuid; "but Grainne, the daughter of Cormac, has conceived a desire for those berries which thou hast; therefore I now tell thee it is to seek them by fair means or foul that I am come upon this visit."

Then a terrific combat ensues; till at last Diarmuid, wrenching the club from the ring which fastens it round the giant's body, "strikes three mighty strokes upon him, so that he dashes his brains out through the openings of his head and of his ears, and leaves him dead without life."

Then when the corpse—a sight so likely to offend delicate female nerves—has been hid away, Grainne is sent for. "There, O Grainne," says he, "are the berries thou didst ask for, and do thou thyself pluck of them whatever pleases thee." But Grainne—sweet creature—knows the value of a little coquetry. "I swear," says she, "that I will not taste a single berry of them but the berry that thy hand shall pluck, O Diarmuid."

At length, after countless perils encountered and escaped, Diarmuid, by the aid of his friend Aonghus of the Boyne, the Druid, and Cormac, the father of Grainne, patches up a peace with Fionn.

And Cormac gives his other daughter, Ailbe, "for wife and mate to Fionn, that he may let Diarmuid be;" and Diarmuid takes Grainne to live at Rath-Ghrainne, in what is now the county of Sligo, and they dwell there a long time in peace without thought of Fionn. Grainne bears to Diarmuid four sons and a daughter; and it is said "that there is not living at the same time with him a man richer in gold and silver, in kine and sheep, and who makes more Preys than Diarmuid."

Fionn is entertained royally by them at a great feast, and by-gones are suffered to be by-gones.

But Fionn, though he dissembles his malice, still bears enmity to Diarmuid. Aware that Diarmuid is under "Druidical restrictions not to hunt pig," he engages him in the chase of the wild boar of Beann Gulbain, and throws him in the way of the savage beast. Diarmuid kills the boar, but at the same time receives frightful injuries.

Now it is Fionn's special privilege that "to whomsoever he shall give a drink of water from the palms of his hands, that man shall be sound from any sickness."

Diarmuid bethinks him of this, and asks Fionn for the drink, conjuring him by the memory of the long years they spent in friendship, and the many occasions in past times he has perilled his life in Fionn's cause.

Fionn refuses again and again, till his followers all cry shame on him. At last he goes to the well, but he lets the water slip through his fingers. He goes back again to the well, but before he can return Diarmuid dies.*

Then Fionn and his people go to break the news to Grainne; and we are told that "when Grainne was certified of the death of Diarmuid, she uttered a long, exceedingly piteous cry, so that it was heard in the distant parts of the Rath," and her women came about her. "And truly my very heart is grieved," said she to them, "that I am not myself able to fight with Fionn, for, were it so, I would not have suffered him to leave this place in safety." Then she sends for her children who are out at fosterage. "O dear children," says she to them, "your father has been slain by Fionn Mac Chumhaill, against his bonds and covenants, and avenge ye that upon him well." And she bids them go into distant countries "and learn carefully all practice of bravery and of valour till they shall have reached their full strength," that they may be in a condition to make war successfully upon Fionn.

When Fionn hears this, he considers within his own mind that he must "soothe Grainne." "So he got him to Rath-Ghrainne, and greeted her craftily and cunningly, and with sweet words. Grainne neither heeded nor hearkened to him, but told him to leave her sight, and straightway assailed him with her keen, very sharp pointed tongue. However, Fionn left not plying her with sweet words and with gentle, loving discourse, until he brought her to his will." She accepted him after all, her noble husband's murderer, her sister's spouse, the "man older than her father."

* Mr. Joyce makes the tale end with the death of Diarmuid. The sequel which is to be found in all the Irish versions, he rejects for critical reasons which I do not profess myself competent to appreciate. He thinks that this continuation was patched on to the original story by some unskilful hand. All I can say is, if it be an addition it is an addition made by some one who had formed an extremely correct estimate of the character of Grainne.

Such was Grainne. A hero like Diarmuid was the natural prey of such a creature. From the days of Samson to those of Lord Nelson has not valour ever been led captive by a wanton? The better the man the worse the woman, seems to be the rule in these matters.

The story of Grainne is related simply, and without note or comment, by the old Irish Seanchaidhe, whoever he was. He stops neither to blame nor to excuse her. He just tells the tale as it was told to him.

But from the beginning to the end, in all she says and does, this heroine is thoroughly consistent and thoroughly contemptible.

I have thought her character worth examining, not indeed because it is either uncommon or attractive, but because it proves one of two things—either Grainne was a real woman, or the old Irish storytellers possessed more power of observation and more literary skill than they are commonly given credit for.

Becky Sharp is not more true to herself or to nature than is Grainne.

A Roman Penny-a-liner in the Eighteenth Century.

MANY eloquently graphic descriptions of the greatness of the difference between the English life of the middle of the last century and that of the present day are familiar to us; but enormous and striking as that difference is, it is unquestionably less than the difference which exists between the old Papal Rome of the Clements and the Benedicts and the Rome of Humbert I., by the grace of God and the national will King of Italy. And it may be said at the same time that the life of the old Papal city during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries is much less well known to English readers than either the time preceding those centuries, which was still shining with the glories of the Renaissance, or the time subsequent to the French Revolution, which was commended to the attention of Europe by its peculiar share in the consequences of that cataclysm. Yet it was a singularly interesting time too. Death-beds are to the thoughtful student of humanity more interesting than cradles; and the death which, slow, peaceful, and unperceived (till the short sharp convulsion of the last agony), was stealing over so much that made the everyday environment, presents to the clinical student of social systems a singular number of curious and interesting dissolving views from the magic lantern of history.

“History” perhaps is too great a word for the occasion. But the humble chronicler, the memoir writer, the diarist, the preserver of *ricordi* (a specially large class in Italy), have their magic lanterns too; and the views they present are often as vividly coloured, as quaint, and as interesting as any that Mnemosyne in her highest heeled buskin has to offer. A by-way—a blind alley rather—more remote from the beaten historic highway than the story of the vicissitudes of a hapless penny-a-liner—very accurately so called—could hardly perhaps be imagined. And now the reader shall judge whether such a story does not justify the claim that has just been advanced on behalf of such by-ways.

In 1736 Clement XII., the Florentine Corsini, was Pope. We hear much of the omnipresence of the police—the famous *birri*—of those days; and under so perfect and order-loving a despotism as that of the Pontiffs it might be thought that not a mouse could stir in Rome without the permission of the *Bargello*—the head of the police—and his men. The fact is, however, on the contrary, that popular tumults were of very common occurrence in the Eternal City. And one arose in the above-mentioned year which gave no little trouble to the authorities, and the origin of which is itself a curious illustration of the times. Spain and France were at that time allied in war against the German Empire, and

the Spanish Governor of Naples was called upon to do his utmost to furnish his masters with recruits, which the Spanish army greatly needed. Not succeeding in obtaining as many as he needed within the Neapolitan frontier, he sent agents to Rome to pick up idlers in the taverns and *piazze* there. It would seem, however, that the recruiting agents, not likely to be very scrupulous observers of legality, supplemented in some cases persuasion by force. At all events it became believed in Rome that Romans were being kidnapped to be smuggled across the frontier into Naples. Less than such a suspicion would have sufficed to excite the not very calm or law-abiding population of Rome to frenzy. In the twinkling of an eye the city was up in arms, and a vast and furious mob was rushing through the streets in pursuit of the recruiting agents, or indeed, as is the manner of popular justice, of any Spaniard on whom they could lay hands. And it would have gone hard with any one recognised to belong to that nationality had he fallen into the hands of the furious Roman populace. But on the first symptom of the popular rising not only the guilty agents, but all the Spaniards whose position in any way exposed them to the fury of the rioters, rushed for protection either to the Palazzo Farnese or to the palace of the Spanish ambassador in the Piazza di Spagna. The number of the rioters is said to have been between five and six thousand, and it is worthy of notice that they are stated to have been mostly Trasteverini, or inhabitants of the right bank of the river, on which the Vatican and St. Peter's are situated.

This tumult occurred on March 13, 1736.

And especially by reason of the European political situation, which rendered the Pope's position a somewhat difficult one—the only desire of the Apostolic Court being to preserve a perfect neutrality between the contending parties and to keep out of the trouble—this tumult, which seemed to be, or at least was capable of being represented as, an act of hostility against Spain, caused the Papal Government much disquietude and uneasiness. But the riot of March 13 was destined to lead to further and more serious consequences. A Neapolitan contingent of three thousand men, marching northwards to join the Spanish forces, passed by Velletri, where news reached them of the attack on their fellow subjects in Rome; whereupon, on pretext of avenging that injury, they attacked the men of Velletri and attempted to sack that city. But they met with a stouter resistance than they had anticipated, and they were beaten off after severe fighting, in which many lives were lost on both sides. As soon as the tidings of this little battle reached Rome, Cardinal Aquaviva, the ambassador from Naples, demanded signal reparation for the insult offered to Spain. Of course the Spanish ambassador supported him, and they pushed their pretensions so far as actually to demand that the Roman Senate should repair in person to Madrid to beg for pardon. Pope Clement was blind, eighty-five years old, and extremely desirous of keeping himself and his city out of the fray. But this Spanish insolence fired the old Corsini blood. The Pope replied that

Rome was not wont to brook humiliation, and forthwith sent away the Spanish and Neapolitan ministers and recalled his nuncio from Madrid and from Naples.

In this state of things it may be readily imagined how eagerly the excited Roman world looked out for the morning papers. But there were no papers, either morning or evening. The publication of news, in its infancy even in the foremost capitals, was absolutely non-existent in Rome. The Papal Government, strongly impressed by the fact that "silence is golden," had at all times a special dislike to be talked about. But, with the usual perversity of human nature, the more difficult it was to learn what was going on, the more anxious and curious people were to hear. And to do so, though very difficult, was not impossible. News was provided in those days in Rome for those who could pay for it. And the modes in which, and the circumstances under which, it was provided are so curious, and form so special a chapter of the history of that time and clime, that it is worth while to spend a few words on the explanation of them.

There may be seen, even at the present day, in one or two of the remoter parts of Rome, in spots where the scantiness of the traffic or the irregularity of the buildings affords a little quiet space, a small assemblage of some four or five little tables, at each of which is seated a generally black-coated and always singularly seedy-looking individual, with pens and ink on the table before him. These men earn a sufficiently miserable livelihood by writing for those who are unable to do so for themselves—love-letters, or the replies to them; begging letters for the impostors who live by them; petitions from all sorts of the poor-devil category of humanity to all sorts of persons, for all sorts of things; and the like. These scribes are the latest lingering representatives of the once flourishing offices of the copyists, one of the manifold occupations of which was the production of the *avvisi*, or advice-sheets, which, at the period of which I am speaking, supplied the place of newspapers to the curious gossips of Rome. The trade was in those days a good one. In a city constituted as Rome was, a larger part of the population consisted, as will be readily understood, of entirely idle persons than in any other community in the world. And the desire for and consumption of "news" was great in proportion. All classes purchased these *avvisi*, from the secretary of a cardinal to the barber, part of whose business was to amuse his customers with the chat of the day. But it must be understood that the whole of this flourishing business was highly illegal, and all the stages of the traffic were clandestine. If a stranger entered the well-known shop of one of these *copisti*, and asked for a sheet of news of the day, or for this or that piece of news which had already become known, the master of the establishment would have replied that he knew nothing whatever of anything of the sort; that he had heard that such a paper had been seen in the city, but had no idea whence it had proceeded; that he, for his part, never meddled with such

matters; that he copied any writing for anybody who brought him anything to copy; never asked any questions, and never knew anything further of the matter. The real truth, however, was not only that he was in the daily habit of selling the *avvisi* in question to those whom he knew to be safe customers, but that he kept the composers of such sheets in his pay. It will be very readily understood that the profits of this by no means otherwise than lucrative clandestine trade were not at all equally divided between the writers of these news-sheets and the *copista* in whose office they were multiplied, and who disposed of them with the requisite caution to the public. Of course the latter absorbed by far the larger share of the proceeds, and the hapless penny-a-liners who worked for him were, for the most part, very literally such.

Now, illegal as the whole trade was, and though it would at no time have been safe to neglect the precautions that have been described, the Government, for the most part, gave itself very little trouble about the matter in normal times. The *avvisi* were everywhere. They were seen in the studies of cardinals, in the alcoves of princesses, on the wine-stained tables of the taverns. Nobody knew whence they came, and nobody asked any indiscreet questions on the subject.

The time, however, to which we have been referring was not a normal time. The riot of March 13, 1736, and the consequences which had resulted from it, had placed the Apostolic Government in a position of great perplexity and difficulty; and it was felt that the relations of the news-writers on the subject, and, still worse, their commentaries on the subsequent events, might contribute to embroil his Holiness with foreign governments. The matter was therefore unusually serious.

But as it must be a very ill wind which blows nobody at all any good, the trouble of the Apostolic Court was the news-writer's opportunity. Of course a thousand rumours were rife as to the incidents of the tumult, and yet more as to the measures taken and likely to be taken by the Government. Never had there been remembered such a demand for *avvisi*; and it is needless to say that in this case at least the supply was equal to the demand. All the pens of all the news-writers were busy; and very specially busy was that of one, perhaps at that time the foremost and ablest of the confraternity.

The Conte or Abate Enrico Trivelli—for he was sometimes called by the one title and sometimes by the other—had a better right to the first than to the second appellation. His grandfather had been valet to the Marchese del Vasto, and had followed that nobleman with great fidelity when he, as a partisan of the Empire, and consequently an enemy of Spain, had been exiled from his Neapolitan home and compelled to seek refuge in the dominions of the Emperor. There he had obtained from the Emperor for his favourite and faithful follower a patent of nobility which made him a Hungarian count. The title duly descended to his son, and to his son's eldest son, our Conte Enrico. He was born at Naples in 1709, but was educated at Vasto, in the king-

dom of Naples, where his family possessed some property, and where he gave proofs of having profited to the utmost by the instructions of his clerical teachers. He founded there a branch of the Academy of Arcadia when he was only twenty-one years old; and in 1730, on the elevation of Clement XII. to the Chair of St. Peter, he published verses in honour of the new Pontiff. Probably these literary successes were the cause of his migration to Naples shortly afterwards. There he was frequently called the Abate Trivelli; not that he had ever received even minor orders, but because it was the fashion of the time for those who affected literary pursuits to assume the ecclesiastical habit and title.

At Naples the poetaster Abate soon dissipated his modest patrimony, and then, after the universal fashion of the literary adventurers of that day, betook himself to Rome in quest of employment and fortune. At first his appearance in the streets and literary resorts and lounges of the Eternal City was that of a gay and smart young Abate, whose poetical pretensions and reputation secured him a welcome among the *littérateurs* of the day. The *Custos* of Arcadia was at that time the Abate Lorenzini, who was a member of the household of Cardinal Borghese. The Abate Trivelli became intimate with him, obtained by his means the *entrée* to several houses of the Roman ecclesiastical and lay aristocracy, and was often seen at "Arcadia" and in other resorts of the literary world. But all this while the small remains of the funds which the gay young Abate had brought with him from Naples were rapidly verging towards exhaustion. He was all this time seeking to attach himself to the "service," as it was called, of some great lay or ecclesiastical patron. In what capacity? it may be asked. What service was he fitted to render? Absolutely none. He was good for nothing save to write bad verses. But, as things were in the world around him, there was neither folly nor presumption in his supposing that this need be no impediment whatever in his quest. All the great houses of the Roman world, whether those of the cardinals or of the Roman princes, most of them the descendants of the relatives of popes or cardinals, harboured a larger or smaller number of absolutely useless parasites, who were termed "gentlemen in the service of" this or the other grandee. In times a little previous to those of which we are speaking such persons were expected to be ready to use their swords in the service of their patron. In the eighteenth century it was a recommendation if they could do as much with their pens. And this the Abate Trivelli could do. Nevertheless nothing but disappointment awaited him. Great as was the number of berths for useless idletonians, the number of members of that class who aspired to fill them was greater still. And our poor Abate could find nothing. Absolute want was before him. By rapid degrees the smart and dandified Abate became shabbier and shabbier. Ecclesiastical garments of the last degree of seediness were common enough in Rome; but such were not seen in cardinals' palaces. Poor Trivelli was no longer able to show himself in the houses he had been in the

habit of frequenting. All hopes of becoming anybody's "gentleman" were at an end, and he was in imminent danger of starvation. Something he must do, and that at once.

The respectable and well-to-do citizen Signor Martino Dominici, the scrivener, as we should say, or copyist, as they said at Rome, was at home superintending his clerks in his well-known establishment in the Campo Marzio, when a very seedy and half-starved-looking young man presented himself in the office, desiring to speak with Signor Dominici.

Now, well-to-do as the scrivener was, and highly respectable as was his place of business, it did so happen that not unfrequently similarly seedy and out-at-elbows-looking individuals, generally in more or less distinctively ecclesiastical costume, had occasion to see him on business; and though the occasion here spoken of was the first on which Signor Martino Dominici and poor Abate Trivelli had met, the latter was at once asked to step into the scrivener's sanctum, behind the public office.

It is needless to occupy space unnecessarily by an attempt to give dramatically the dialogue that ensued, to which would of course be wanting the absolute truthfulness which belongs to the facts which have been and are about to be narrated. Suffice it to say that after the due amount of protestation on the part of the respectable Signor Dominici to the effect that he knew nothing about the contents of the writings brought to his place of business to be copied—that, as for *avvisi*, he never meddled with anything of the sort—the half-starved Abate found the means of persuading the scrivener that he might, at all events in this matter, be trusted, and the two men soon understood each other.

This occurred shortly after the tumult of March 13, 1736, and the producers and sellers of *avvisi* had reaped a good harvest from the highly excited curiosity of the public. But it was evident that the orange was not squeezed dry yet. After the *Descrizione del Tumulto* there was a *Ragionamento Morale* about the tumult, and then a *Lettera Critica* on the same subject. And there is no doubt that both the latter were by the pen of the indigent Conte Abate Trivelli.

A "Description of the Tumult"! Well, seeing that the facts were patent enough, and that the *Descrizione* said no more than the truth, the Papal Government did not pay much attention to that. But a "Moral Consideration" of the affair and a "Critical Letter" on the subject was a different matter and roused the authorities. There was considerable danger, as has been pointed out, that the Apostolic Court might get into serious trouble with some foreign government; and when you came to moral considerations and critical letters it seemed exceedingly probable that this danger might be increased.

So the Cardinal Neri Maria Corsini, the nephew of the Pope, who was at the head of the Government, sent for the Governor of Rome, Monsignor Marcellino Gorio, and very significantly recommended to him a greater degree of vigilance in the matter of the clandestine and illegal

production and sale of news-sheets, observing, further, that the abuse had risen to intolerable proportions, that the writers dared to meddle with matters of State, and that it was necessary to make an example.

The Governor understood that it behoved him to be active and find the means of putting a stop to the *avvisi* in some way or other. So he forthwith sent for the Bargello—a name of fear in old Rome. The Bargello was the head of the police; and as the business of keeping things quiet and preventing crime and irregularities from protruding themselves too prominently before holy eyes was carried on without any troublesome reference to forms of law, the power of the Bargello and the terror inspired by him were considerable. And the Governor said to the Bargello much the same as the Cardinal had said to him, adding that it was absolutely necessary that the writer of these productions should be discovered, and that he need spare no money for the purpose of doing so. The Bargello promised with the utmost confidence that the names of the writers should be in Monsignore's hands before many days should have passed. "And, by the bye," added the Governor as the Bargello was leaving him, "his Eminence wishes in the meantime to see all the writings that appear on the subject." "Monsignore shall be obeyed," said the Bargello and bowed himself out.

That formidable functionary returned to the dread high quarters of his office, where he lived surrounded by the *birri*, his myrmidons, for whom his word, let that word be what it might, was law; and summoning one of these ministers without the loss of so much as a minute, he bade him go to the Campo Marzio and tell Signor Dominici that he wanted to speak with him at his office for a minute. "But," says the reader, "I thought that the whole manufacture and the traffic in these *avvisi* was clandestine and a profound secret from the authorities." Those who understand more of Italian ways, and especially of those ways in the olden time, will comprehend perfectly well that most clandestine things in Rome were perfectly well known to the Bargello, and that it by no means followed that the law should be put in motion or any public notice be taken of them.

A sudden cold fit struck Signor Dominici's heart on hearing the message brought by the *birro*, and, despite his recognised respectability, an expression passed over his face which induced the *birro*, who understood his business, to say in a careless manner that he fancied Signor Dominici was wanted to copy some ancient writings, of which work he knew there was plenty on hand.

Somewhat reassured, the respectable Signor Dominici arranged his full-bottomed wig, took his three-cornered hat from its peg and his ivory-topped cane in his hand, and set forth on his walk to the central police office. Arrived there, he was at once shown in with all show of respect to the private cabinet of the Bargello.

That officer received him in the most friendly manner. Of course on the first mention of the business in hand the worthy scrivener pro-

tested that he knew nothing about *avvisi* or any such matters. It was his business to copy what was brought him to be copied, and he did so. At least it was done in his office—often without his ever having seen either original or copy. No questions were asked. It constantly occurred that he had no knowledge whatever of the names of the persons who brought MSS. to be copied; very often, indeed, never saw their faces again.

To all which the Bargello replied in the most friendly fashion that of course he knew very well that Signor Dominici had nothing to do with the production or dissemination of scurrilous writings; that were it not so he should not be talking with him then and there in the manner he was; but that the Government was desirous of having an opportunity of seeing the writings in question, and that it had occurred to him that Signor Dominici, being, as he notoriously was, a faithful and well-disposed servant of the Holy See, might from the nature of his business be able to render service to the Government in this matter.

The Bargello proceeded to touch lightly upon the desire of his Eminence Corsini, the Cardinal Nephew, to be made acquainted with the names of the composers of these papers; and, in reply to fresh protests of the scrivener that, though he was perfectly ready to bring to that office copies of any of the current pasquinades and satires that he could lay his hands on, it was utterly out of the question that he should be able to discover the names of the writers, he did not insist on this point, but merely said that if he could learn the names of any of the authors it would be all the better, but that the main thing was to bring him the papers.

“And don't suppose, my good friend,” added the Bargello, “that I or the Government of the Holy Father want you to work for nothing. The workman is worthy of his hire. *Diamine!* Now, look you. For every one of those pestilent papers that you bring me I will pay you eight, nine, or ten crowns, according to the importance of it.”

Eight or ten crowns for every squib that he could bring! Signor Dominici could hardly believe his ears. It seemed as if an Eldorado was opening to his eyes in endless vistas. But, though delighted, he was, like a genuine Italian, still cautious amid his exultation. And it occurred to him that it might be wise, in case any trouble should, *par impossibile*, arise out of the business he was undertaking for the Bargello, to provide another head than his own on whom the thunderbolt might fall if it became a question of the falling of any such. Besides, it was evident to Signor Dominici at a glance that it would be desirable to provide for a larger supply of the wares of which the Bargello was in quest than the ordinary state of matters furnished. If squibs were to be paid eight or ten crowns apiece, it would be difficult to have too many of them.

And these considerations induced him to say, as he was leaving the Bargello's cabinet, that he thought he knew a man who might be able to

be of more use in this manner than he himself could. And in reply to the questions of that functionary, who took care not to allow any of his newly-awakened interest to appear in his manner, he mentioned the Abate Trivelli. He was employed, Signor Dominici said, as a copyist, and was very likely to have such things as the Bargello wanted passing through his hands.

"Well," said the Bargello, "let him come to me here with any of the papers in question he can lay hands on, and he shall be paid at the same rate I have promised you."

And so the two men parted on the pleasantest terms.

Dominici went immediately to look for Trivelli, and seems to have truly and straightforwardly enough repeated to him all that had passed between him and the Bargello. Trivelli was even more delighted at the prospect of earning so easily what was riches for him than the less needy scrivener had been. The two men agreed that they would work together, and go halves in the proceeds. And it was not till after Trivelli had parted from his patron and friend that a doubt as to the possible motive of Dominici in thus sharing with him gains, which apparently he might keep all for himself, seems to have suggested itself to him and caused him some disquietude. But on second thoughts he came to the conclusion that Dominici being aware that he, Trivelli, really knew more about the *avvisi* and the different manufactories of them than he did himself, had come to the conclusion that a much larger harvest might be reaped by going shares with him.

The reasoning which reassured Trivelli, however, may not perhaps seem entirely convincing to the reader, who has the entire record before him. It seems hardly likely that a man in the position of Signor Dominici should have had any difficulty in procuring copies of any or all of the papers going about Rome, and thus getting for himself all that was to be got out of the Bargello. And a consideration of the entire story has suggested to the present writer a suspicion that the Bargello's little word about discovering the writers of the papers had so frightened the worthy scrivener that he forthwith conceived the idea of providing a person to whose share this dangerous portion of the police officer's commission should fall, and who should at need serve himself as a scape-goat. Trivelli, however, on his part seems to have had no further misgivings.

But there is one other explanation of Dominici's conduct, which may be the true one. It has been said that the supply of these clandestine papers, news-sheets, satires, dialogues, epigrams, pasquinades, was sure to be equal to the demand. But if this is true it must be understood of the normal demand. The offer which the Bargello in his zeal was making would have the effect of at once creating an abnormal demand. Eight or ten crowns for every such writing! What abundance of them could suffice to satisfy the greed created by such an offer? "If there are not as many as one could wish, Trivelli can make them fast enough. And

Trivelli, I know," the scrivener may have added to himself, "has a friend who can help in the work. It is hard if the Bargello is not served to his heart's content between us. And, come what will, I am only a copyist."

The friend of Trivelli to whom Signor Dominici alluded in his mind was one Gian Battista Jacoponi, a priest who lived by his pen after the same manner as Trivelli. He was, if anything, a step lower in the social scale, and a little more deeply plunged in poverty, want, and misery, than his friend the Abate. He had, to be sure, the resource, which Trivelli had not, of earning a stray paul now and then by following a bier or saying a mass. It was not lawful for him to do this without having obtained a "*celebret*" from the ordinary, since he was not a priest of the diocese of Rome. And sometimes the *celebret* was refused to him. And sometimes he would say a mass, if he could get employed to say one, without the *celebret*, thus rendering himself liable to fines and penalties. It was the duty of the sacristan of every church not to allow a priest other than those belonging to the diocese to say mass in the church entrusted to him without the production of the *celebret*; but it would seem that poor Jacoponi sometimes found a sacristan whose compassion for his all but starving condition induced him to forget to ask for the needed document. The man was the type of a class then common enough, and not yet wholly extinct in Rome—the unbeneficed, unattached pauper priest. Work of any kind was not only impossible to his physical capabilities, but forbidden to him by the laws of his caste. Alms and ecclesiastical functions so bestowed or permitted as to be of the nature of alms were indeed abundant—so abundant as to ensure the yet greater abundance of the claimants of them. How, then, was such a man as the Rev. Gian Battista Jacoponi to live? He could use a pen; and he had such an amount of superiority in native wit to the majority of his class as made it possible for him to use it mischievously and offensively. And these facts sufficiently marked out to him his career. He too was in some sort attached to the Campo Marzio "copying" establishment of Signor Martino Dominici. Not, it would seem, so exclusively attached to it as to prevent his carrying his wares elsewhere, if he could see an opening for so doing, but to such a degree as to render Signor Dominici his principal patron, and to make that worthy tolerably accurately acquainted with his doings and his whereabouts. Such was the friend and brother penny-a-liner of Trivelli on whom the scrivener counted as just the man to assist in the production of a sufficient quantity of piquant libels to satisfy the Bargello's utmost craving in that line, and to ensure a steady flow of the Holy Father's crown pieces into his own pockets.

A meeting was arranged between the Bargello, Dominici, and Trivelli; not, as is noteworthy and curious, at the great man's office, as was done in the case of the respectable scrivener, but in a secret and mysterious manner. Dominici and the Abate were told to be after nightfall at a certain remote spot in the city, and to await there the coming of the Bargello's carriage. He came very punctually, motioned them to get

into the carriage, which drove with them to the huge colonnade which encircles the Piazza of St. Peter, as solitary a spot at that hour as any in the wilderness of the Campagna. Walking in the double obscurity of that grove of gigantic columns, the three men arranged the business in hand very quickly. The Bargello was as affable as ever, and as ready with his promises of unlimited crowns. To protestations on the part of Trivelli that he, for his part, had never had any part in the composition of the productions in question, the Bargello replied that if he were not quite certain of that he should not be then and there discussing the matter with him, and then drove off, leaving them to regain their homes thoroughly well satisfied with their interview.

It does not seem that Jacoponi was ever introduced to the great man. His share of the gains consisted apparently only in having plenty of work and getting paid for it at the ordinary rate.

And for a while all went on swimmingly, and apparently to the satisfaction of all parties. Satires, imaginary dialogues, criticisms, prophecies, malignant libels in every form and on all sorts of persons, were carried to the Bargello day by day, and paid for by him with unstinted liberality. Gradually the audacity of the libellers increased, and the desire to make their wares more and more worth paying for induced them to fly at higher game. The Cardinal Neri Corsini was transported with indignation when the Governor of Rome, to whom the Bargello regularly transmitted his collection of libels, handed him one day a "Dialogue" between himself and Cardinal Coscia. The latter was a degraded and infamous man, who for swindling and other abominations had been imprisoned in St. Angelo and then exiled to Naples. No power on earth, however, can unempurple a once hatted cardinal; and Coscia came back from Naples subsequently under a safe-conduct in order that he might take part in the Conclave which assembled at the death of Clement XII. And the convict swindler did sit in it, and contributed by his vote to the election of the succeeding Vicar of Christ.

The audacity of the lampooner who dared to represent this infamous man as conversing in friendly talk and on equal terms with him, the Cardinal Nephew, was an outrage which wounded the *amour propre* of the proud and dignified Neri Corsini very deeply. But worse was yet to come. Shortly afterwards the Bargello handed to the Governor, and the Governor to the Cardinal, a shameful and scandalous attack on the honour and good name of the Princess Corsini, the Pope's niece. The Cardinal was furious. But shortly there came satires and political appreciations which yet more seriously disquieted the Cardinal and the Government of the Apostolic Court. Enough has been said at the beginning of this article to show that the then condition of Europe was such as to cause the Papal government to consider its relations with more than one foreign government critical and embarrassing; and Clement XII.'s counsellors became convinced that foreign agents were in reality prompting and inspiring the *avvisi*. The reader knows that the entire

mass of these scurrilous writings, many of them still existing in the Roman archives, exceedingly indecent, and all vilely libellous, was the produce of two or three poverty-stricken wretches writing for bread, and encouraged by the exceptional market for their production which the absurdly injudicious measures of the Government had provided. The thing had been going on now from the latter part of March to October; and the Government, becoming not only exasperated, but alarmed, were determined to strike, even at the hazard of striking amiss.

Just then Trivelli carried to the Bargello a writing entitled *Un Consiglio al Rè delle due Sicilie*. And this counsel to the King of Naples was simply hostile to the Holy See and its policy. Corsini, when he received it, doubted no longer that foreign agents were at work to produce all this mischief and disturbance. Now, the paper carried to the Bargello by Trivelli was "the first part" only of the MS. in question. The Abate was naturally careful not to sell too much of his wares for one fee. The Bargello inquired eagerly for the second part; and in a few days the second part was ready and was brought to him. The Abate received his money and was allowed to go. But when shortly after Signor Dominici came with a sonnet grievously offensive to the Papal Government, the Bargello very closely pressed him as to the authorship. The scrivener was, however, perfectly unshaken in his protestations that he knew absolutely nothing on the subject. "Only the other day," said the Bargello, "Trivelli brought me two parts of an abominably treasonable *Consiglio al Rè delle due Sicilie*. It is impossible that you should have no idea who wrote that."

"I cannot know what Trivelli does," replied Dominici, already frightened out of his wits and disposed to shift the trouble from his own shoulders to those of his friend at the earliest opportunity.

"I suppose not. Oh, of course not! At the same time, look here, my good friend, Dominici; I have been paying and paying for a good while now; and I don't mean to get nothing for my money. Come, what is Trivelli doing?"

"The Abate Trivelli is a very mysterious man."

"Humph! so he seems."

"If I go to his room he is always hiding away writings and papers in a great hurry."

"That looks bad."

"To tell the truth, the suspicion has occurred to me that he writes some of these things himself."

"With what object?"

"How can I say? I know he has relations with people in high position at Naples."

"Well," concluded the Bargello, "I have full confidence in you; and your welfare requires that it should be continued," he added with a significant look. And so the two men parted, perfectly understanding each other.

Soon after this, on October 30, the Abate Trivelli carried to the Bargello a third part of the *Consiglio al Rè delle due Sicilie*. That functionary desired him to read the MS. Trivelli complied.

"Now, who gave you the original of that document?" said the Bargello, short and sharp.

The trembling culprit replied, of course, by a string of inventions and falsehoods, naming one Constantino Grimaldi, a Neapolitan, who had no existence save in his invention.

All this time Dominici had been in an adjoining room. The Bargello called him in, and shortly told them they were both under arrest. They were at once carried off to the cells attached to the police office. But Dominici was released the same night. That same night also the priest Jacoponi and several other copyists were arrested, and their domiciles searched. Little or nothing was found to criminate either Trivelli or Jacoponi, save in the miserable chamber inhabited by the latter some extracts from the history of Guicciardini, a very specially prohibited author. In the dwellings of some of the other copyists a few more or less compromising writings were found.

For a month Trivelli maintained silence, saying that he knew nothing more than he had already told; but at the end of a month's imprisonment he declared that he had made up his mind to confess everything, and named a variety of persons, Leopoldo Metastasio, the brother of the poet, among others, as the authors of the writings in question. Many of those named were arrested, but it was soon found that they were altogether innocent of the things imputed to them.

Jacoponi gave the examiners less trouble. It was easily proved against him that he had often been in hiding from his creditors; that he had carried off a mattress lent him for charity's sake; that he had been a loose liver; that he had frequently said mass without the *celebret*. Overwhelmed by all this testimony against him, the poor wretch confessed that the "sonnets" were from his pen; that he had written them to escape starvation; and that Trivelli, while engaging him to write them, gave him but a miserable pittance out of the sums he was all the time receiving from the Bargello. The sonnet on the Princess Corsini was his. There are eight of these precious productions among the archives of the trial, full of ribaldry and obscenity, but scarcely sufficiently connected to have any sense in them.

But Trivelli continued firm in his system of denial, and reiterated examinations and interrogations carried the time on to February of the year 1737. In that month the examining judges determined to place suborned witnesses in the cell with Trivelli. Two men, a cobbler and a water-carrier, were placed in the same cell with him, and after a short time swore that he had confessed himself the author of the writings he was suspected to have written, and that he was guilty of a variety of abominations besides. There can be little doubt that the whole of this testimony was absolutely false.

A court of special commissioners was named for the trial, an indication of the importance attributed to the matter by the Government. The trial was conducted with closed doors, in Latin, and entirely by means of written pleadings. The proceedings are full of absurdities. The public prosecutor produced the testimony of the landlady of Trivelli's lodging, who deposed that he was constantly writing at night with his door locked. And this damning evidence is rebutted by his advocate, not by pointing out that the fact that a man is employed in writing hardly proves him to have been engaged in writing treason, but by quoting certain ancient authors who say, "*Mulier dicitur mendax, fallax, dolosa, perjura, mutabilis et varia.*" Ergo the landlady's evidence is worth nothing.

Trivelli continued firm in his absolute denial to the end; but, despite such solemn judicial trifling as the above, and much more of the same sort, his own guilt, and the infamy and falsehood of his denunciations of others, was clear to all men. Of course the issue of the trial was from the beginning of it not doubtful. On February 20, 1737, the sentence was pronounced.

Count Enrico Trivelli, for the composition of malicious and seditious writings, is condemned to be decapitated and to perpetual infamy.

The priest Gian Battista Jacoponi, for the composition of slanderous writings, is condemned to be decapitated, having first been unfrocked and subject to the approval of his Holiness.

All the other prisoners were released, some absolved and the others adjudged to have been sufficiently punished by the imprisonment they had already suffered.

Jacoponi was taken back to his cell, because, before subjecting him to capital punishment by the secular arm, it was necessary that he should undergo the ceremony of degradation from the priesthood, and before this could be proceeded to it was necessary to refer to the Holy Father.

But Trivelli was at once taken to the "conforteria"—literally, comforting place—of the prison, and handed over to the Brethren of San Giovanni Decollato, whose office it was to prepare condemned criminals for execution.

In the meantime all Rome was thronging to see the ceremony of the degradation of a priest. It was appointed to take place in the church of Santa Lucia del Gonfalone. Already at an early hour of February 22 the crowd in the vicinity of the church was such that the circulation was impeded. The carriages of the princes, prelates, and noble ladies who were anxious to enjoy the spectacle, and who had obtained tickets from the Governor of Rome admitting them to the church, could hardly reach the door of it. It became necessary to call out soldiers to keep the mob in order and clear the way. But here a difficulty presented itself. It was known that the soldiers and the *birri* of the police would infallibly fight together if they encountered each other on the same

ground. At last, to avoid this, it was decided that the *birri* should be employed only within the church, while the soldiers should keep order in the street. When all was arranged, however, a message was brought to the Governor from the Secretary of State, the Cardinal Neri Corsini, ordering him to suspend the proceedings, in order to allow time for more mature deliberation on the part of the Holy Father. So the crowd waited in anxious expectation of the spectacle till the evening, when a missive was brought to the Governor announcing that his Holiness had commuted the sentence of death in the case of Gian Battista Jacoponi to imprisonment in the galleys for life. The ceremony of degradation, therefore, was unnecessary.

Great was the disappointment of the rank and fashion of Rome. The ladies, the prelates, and the princes had to console themselves with the reflection that an execution still remained to them. Still the decapitation of a layman was but a small and uninteresting matter in comparison with the degradation and expected execution of a priest.

The chronicler records that the Cardinal Vicar-General Guadagni was the most efficacious suppliant to Clement for the life of the poor priest. The Vicar-General, whose office is that of the real and acting Bishop of the Diocese of Rome, represented to the Holy Father that he was himself the most grossly attacked of all Jacoponi's victims; that it would be a permanent grief to him to have caused the death of any man; and, finally, he is said to have clinched the matter by an argument, which decided the Holy Father to be "merciful," by representing to him that the galleys were worse than a hundred deaths.

And thus the pauper priest Gian Battista Jacoponi vanishes into the darkness, and we hear no more of him.

At ten o'clock on the night of February 22 the Abate Count Enrico Trivelli was sleeping profoundly, when the Governor's officer came to intimate to him his sentence, which, however, he knew already; and the "comforters" of the Brotherhood of San Giovanni Decollato appeared at the officer's heels to perform their office. The unhappy man would none of their comfort. He, however, sent for the chief person of the Brotherhood, and to him declared, signing his formal declaration to that effect, the entire innocence of all the persons he had accused. He then asked for paper and pen and wrote a letter to his mother. But the brothers of the confraternity continued to urge him to turn his thoughts from the life he was about to quit to that he was on the point of entering. But their efforts were in vain. He brusquely told them not to trouble him with the vulgar and threadbare phrases they were accustomed to address to ordinary malefactors; and again demanding pen and ink, he indited a long supplication to the Pope—in verse!

Among the records of the trial and its result the poem composed under such strange circumstances is preserved. It will hardly be imagined that the poor penny-a-liner's verses had under the best circumstances much pretension to poetry; but it is truly extraordinary, and

is a singular instance of the ruling habitude, if not the ruling passion, strong in death, that the miserable man should have been able to compel his mind under such circumstances to versify at all. He writes :—

Oh, gran Padre del Ciel, venero i tuoi
Arcani; e la cagion de miei affanni
Trovo in me stesso, che per altri errori
Chiamai l' inevitabile vendetta.*

The "other errors" to which he alludes were the having killed a lover of his sister, of whose alliance he disapproved, a deed which appears to have been the cause of his flight from Naples and his seeking a refuge at Rome.

The condemned man's poem terminates thus :—

Deh! con la destra che non mai vi stanca
Di benedir la battezzata gente,
Quel vigore mi reca, il qual mi manca;
E l'ali alla-mia anima
Componi, ond' ella presa a sdegno il suolo
Dispiegghi già su per le stelle il volo.†

And still the principal actor in this strange scene of a last night in a condemned cell could not be got to play his part in it according to the prescribed rules.

The picture which the record presents of the scene in the chamber of the "conforteria," where these things passed, is very singularly characteristic of the time and of the idiosyncrasies of the world which made the time what it was. While the miserable condemned man was persisting in turning a deaf ear to the professional religious comfortings of the brotherhood, and occupying himself with tagging verses, the former amused the intervals in their perfunctory proffers of crucifixes and rosaries, and the other prescribed means for evading the rigour of that judgment which was at the same time represented as infallibly just, by chatting with the guardians and turnkeys and officials, who had looked in to amuse themselves, about the family and progenitors of the prisoner, about a variety of offences attributed by gossip to sundry among these, and by speculative considerations of the probability that such a parentage should lead to the results now before them.

At last the "comforters" of the brotherhood, finding their practised efforts fruitless, decide upon sending for a Jesuit confessor, the Father Santi Canale. This learned divine sets himself at once to the task before him *secundum artem*. But he found his penitent more disposed to argue than to hear. He entered into theological disquisitions with the worthy Jesuit, and made some show of acquaintance with the subject. But the

* "O great Father of Heaven, I venerate thy secrets, and find the cause of my woes in myself, who by other errors have called down on myself inevitable retribution."

† "Oh! with thy right hand, never weary of blessing the baptized, give me that vigour which fails me, and add wings to my soul, so that, disdainig the earth, she may wing her flight to the stars."

hours were slipping away, and the good father was in despair. At last he bethought him of inviting his penitent—I had almost said patient—to recite with him the hymn to the Virgin, *Sub tuum præsidium*. And lo, a miracle! for such the contemporary chronicler evidently considers it. The recalcitrant sinner's heart is softened. He breaks into a convulsion of tears; he confesses in due form, receives the Sacrament, and listens to the exhortations of the confessor.

Thus passed the night of the 22nd, and it is the dawn of the condemned man's last day.

The Brethren of San Giovanni help him to make his toilet. His black coat with silver buttons, his silk cravat, his three-cornered hat with its band of red and white, have all been confiscated for the expenses of the trial, but he is allowed the use of them for this occasion. He is asked, according to custom, whether he wishes for anything. He replies that he has four favours to ask—that he should be spared the sight of the Bargello, who had betrayed him; that the executioner should not lay hands on him; that he should not be manacled; that he should not be blindfolded. But he is told that these things cannot be granted.

At half-past ten he is brought forth from the prison. The fatal cart is in waiting. Around it and immediately in front of the prison door are the Brethren of San Giovanni Decollato, sinister-looking figures in their linen dresses of black, with black hoods hiding the entire face and figure, with their crucifix-bearer rearing an immense crucifix at the head of the cart. A visible shudder passed over the prisoner at the sight, and he flung himself on his knees at the prison door and prayed. Some steps are placed behind the cart, up which he is assisted. The priest Diodato Barcali, stated to have been "a celebrated comforter," enters the cart with him. The executioner, bearing his tremendous weapon, precedes the cart, together with the terrible-looking crucifix-bearer. The cart is surrounded by jailers, black-hooded brethren, and an outer ring of soldiers. And so the procession moves to the Bridge of St. Angelo, which is the place appointed for the execution.

On the piazza in front of the bridge there stood at that time a small chapel, into which condemned criminals were taken to offer up their last prayers. But short space was allowed for them; and when the luckless Count came forth from the little building he saw close to the door of it the gleam of the new axe, which had been provided in compliance with the rule which forbade the execution of a noble with a weapon which had been stained with plebeian blood. Immediately on coming out from the chapel the victim was seized by the executioner, who removed his coat, threw back his shirt from his neck, blindfolded him, and then guided him to the foot of the steps which led to the raised scaffold.

As he felt the first step with his foot a shudder seized him. He threw himself down on his knees, and sobbing, crying aloud, praying, and uttering broken words of appeal to the crowd, strove to gain yet a few moments of existence. But the executioner, becoming impatient, pushed

him from behind, and the Brethren of St. John on either side almost carried him up the steps. His head was forced down upon the block, and in the next moment all was over.

In truth, the "minister of the law" had reason to feel that there was no time to be lost. Not only was all the rank and fashion of Rome assembled to see the spectacle waiting, but the patient had made so many and such unconscionable delays that it was twelve o'clock before the axe fell . . . and at two o'clock the first masquerade of Carnival was to begin!

By rights the body ought to have been exposed to the public curiosity for twenty-four hours; but on this occasion the time was shortened to one hour, in order that it might be possible to get the scaffold and all its hideous accompaniments out of the way before the laughing, screaming, chattering masks should be running over the piazza.

Such was the end of the poor penny-a-liner.

Large numbers, often continuous files, of the *avvisi* spoken of in the preceding pages are preserved in many of the archives and muniment rooms of Rome. In many cases they have been written by persons of a very different stamp from our poor Abate, and they contain a wonderfully rich mine of illustrations of the old Roman life, which has been as yet hardly at all worked. Perhaps at some future day we may attempt to sink another shaft into the ore.

The Decay of Literature.

A DISTINGUISHED French writer not long ago uttered a lamentation over the decline of criticism. The complaint was supported by specific allegations as to the state of French literature, upon which it might be presumptuous to express a decided opinion. Yet such phenomena do not concern one country alone. Changes in the world of thought are propagated rapidly beyond the centre of origin. The alleged causes of decay are certainly operative in England as well as in France; and if it be true that the French are producing no worthy successors to the critics of the past generation, it is time for us to ask whether we can see reason for more cheerful anticipations in England. The complaint, indeed, sounds at first sight ill-directed. We are often told that this is pre-eminently the age of criticism. It is common to allege a proclivity to criticism as some explanation of other deficiencies. In a critical age the artist is made over-sensitive and forced into morbid self-consciousness by the conditions of the time. When he throws his work into a world peopled by Saturday Reviewers and swarming with contributors to periodicals eager for some new victim, he feels like the prisoner in the September massacres, who gathered strength from despair, shut his eyes, and precipitated himself into the armed sea of murderers in the street. The author may be badly off, but the critics themselves must surely be having a fine time of it. If sport with moderns should ever be slack, they can make studies of the past. They can show at once their penetration and their generous enthusiasm by exalting some genius whom his innocent contemporaries had always taken to be a fool. And then criticism has arrayed itself in some of the dignity of a science. It can discourse of phases of development, of the social organism, of differentiation and evolution, and the spirit of the age as learnedly as "sociology" itself. It ridicules the old-fashioned critic of the Rymer and John Dennis period, who was content to point out that Shakespeare often neglected the unities; and smiles at the judicious Addison who tested *Paradise Lost* by the canons of Aristotle and the ingenious M. Bossu. Modern criticism began by an attack upon the rule of Pope, that wicked and narrow-minded person who wished that all the trees of the forest should be clipped and trimmed to suit the neat little Twickenham garden. But this was in early days, when Coleridge and Wordsworth and Lamb were assailing one tyranny only with the aim of restoring the preceding dynasty. We have now reached a wider and more cosmopolitan point of view. We can be just to Pope as well as to the Elizabethans. We are neither classicists nor romanticists, but magnificent eclectics, who

assign to every man his proper place, and pronounce every literary species to be good in its kind. We survey with scientific impartiality the whole field of human achievement; we ticket our specimens as belonging to the ages of iron or the mediæval period, the Renaissance, the *Aufklärung*, the Revolution, and so forth; and fill our museums with the spoils of all ages. And then, guided by the great comparative method, which has worked such wonders, we see how each development was the natural product of the race in its given environment, exalt ourselves above the petty prejudices of any particular place or time, and, ceasing to condemn or absolve in obedience to the temporary dogmatism of passing prejudices, we simply explain. Each great writer takes his proper place as one special avatar of the world-spirit; and we lay down theories firm and irrevocable as those of the physical sciences, and yet leaving full play for intelligent enthusiasm.

Indeed, in all seriousness, we may admit that criticism has of late raised its aims and improved its methods. We cannot read any modern criticism without perceiving that it rests upon investigation incomparably more minute and careful than formerly was thought necessary. If no modern writer can surpass Johnson's vigorous common sense, there is certainly no modern writer with any regard for his reputation who would dare to publish the hasty opinions and slovenly statements of fact which disfigure the *Lives of the Poets*. Nor would any modern so implicitly adopt the canons of any one school and condemn every other form of art so unhesitatingly, as though indifference to its conventions was necessarily an offence against the eternal and infallible code. Our judgments are more catholic—more scientific, if you please—and rest upon a much wider induction and more minute examination of the facts. And yet do we not miss something? If we are less narrow in our principles, are we not blunter in our perceptions? Have we not lost something of the fineness of tact which belonged to men trained in a fixed tradition?

Criticism has become more scientific, but less delicate and less really sympathetic. Read, for example, M. Taine's brilliant account of English literature. It is forcible and comprehensive. It lays down broad and sound principles, and shows us the special case in its larger relations. But when we come to details we are often edified. His criticism of every particular Englishman is but a repetition of the general rule that every Englishman is a broad, beef-eating, coarse, vigorous John Bull, who lives in a fog, and cuts his throat when he has the spleen. We see the type, but not the individual. Charles Lamb can tell us nothing about the organism and the environment, or the influence of climate upon national character. But when he speaks within his own sphere he speaks as an expert, because he speaks as a lover. He is blind, it may be, to all kinds of excellence but one. Yet, when dealing with the objects of his real sympathy, he can in a few words give us more of the true secret than is contained in volumes of ponderous German philosophy or brilliant French science. His mind is so imbued and penetrated with

a certain tradition that he can interpret every inflexion of the voice, catch the half-revealed touches of indirect allusion, relish the most delicate and evanescent flavour, humorous or sentimental, and, in short, respond to his author like a highly-strung instrument. The difference is as the difference between a foreigner who comes to a country village and describes the squire or parson as types of the aristocratic and ecclesiastical developments, and the native who, having never been beyond his horizon, cannot even conceive of a society without a squire and parson, but has yet penetrated the very essence of their character, and can make a shrewd guess at the text of the parson's sermon from the way in which he has tied his bands. The decay of criticism of which our French contemporary complains is due in part to this change. We have become so philosophical and so fond of wide generalisations that we have partly lost our instinct and are incapable of perceiving the individual. The criticism to which he looks back was the criticism of men who did not bother themselves about science, and did not aim at being cosmopolitan, but who, having been brought up in certain traditions—traditions which on the whole, too, represented a vast amount of clear good sense—had still spontaneous instinct enough to judge dogmatically, quickly, and with real perception of the qualities concerned.

This, I say, may be a part of the explanation, and it may go further than appears at first sight. For to say that this is the age of criticism means that it is the age of science. And it would be easy enough to take up an old text and show in how many respects the scientific is opposed to the literary impulse; how caution and circumspection take the place of unhesitating conviction; how science fosters a provisional scepticism, an examination of all supposed first principles, which is fatal to the vivid utterance of any conviction; how it applies a chilling "if" to all the imagery in which some conditional belief is necessary even for the artist who takes it to symbolise his creations; how a period in which we are prying into the roots of all traditional creeds is not a period in which they will bear the blossom of poetical embodiment. Yet all this is a generality rather too wide for our purpose, and like other generalities requiring much qualification. Science has flourished alongside of art in the great periods, and to say that the two cannot again flourish together is to show a want of faith in the essential unity of all intellectual development. The phenomenon which we are considering requires some more specific explanation. We may doubt, in fact, if we look a little further, that other causes would have to be assigned.

How does the change in criticism manifest itself in other departments of literature? Can we speak of a decay of criticism without reflecting that there is a much wider decay—a decay of literature itself? It is a delicate matter to handle; for we would not shock living sensibilities by quoting them as examples of obvious degeneracy. There is no want of men of talent, though there may be a dearth of genius, and it would be ungrateful to reproach a genuine poet because he is not one of the great lights

of all time. Half the argument must therefore be left to be filled up by readers. Yet it would be affectation to doubt of certain general results. Would any one maintain, for example, that we are in a great poetical epoch—an epoch such as that of the early years of this or the seventeenth or perhaps even the eighteenth century; that any one will care a century hence to study our poets, as we study Shakespeare, and Spenser, and Milton, and Byron, and Shelley, and Wordsworth, and Keats, and Scott? We have, of course, two great poets still amongst us, and still writing; but, alas! we cannot mention the names of Mr. Tennyson and Mr. Browning without remembering that they belong more to the outgoing than to the existing generation. There are certainly two or three other younger poets whose genius is equally beyond dispute to men of taste; yet it is some time since even the youngest revealed his powers to the world; and he would be a bold man who would say that he could see elsewhere indications of a ripening intellectual harvest likely to be as rich as the old. Again, let those of us who are old enough go back some thirty years in imagination and compare the prophets of that day with the prophets of this. Let them try to make all possible allowance for the natural illusion which casts a halo round the teachers of our youth. Can they, after making the comparison, say fairly that we could match man for man? In the first period most young men of any intellectual activity followed one of these remarkable teachers. Cardinal Newman is still with us, but has already become classical. Is there any modern theologian who, regarded merely from the literary point of view, is master of so admirable a style, who can display such admirable dialectical skill, such subtlety of thought, such delicacy of sentiment, such a blending of strength with grace, as used to charm the enthusiasts of the movement in which he was the chief leader? Another set of zealots followed the teaching of Carlyle. Carlyle's style will, of course, be condemned by literary purists; and those who object to a free use of the grotesque or the overstrained may show abundant reasons for not accepting him as a model. But it is not from that point of view that he can be adequately judged. And one may safely say that there is no living writer whose influence over congenial minds is comparable to Carlyle's as an intellectual stimulus. You might return from the strange glooms and splendours of the *French Revolution* or *Sartor Resartus* revolted or fascinated; but to read them with appreciation was to go through an intellectual crisis, and to enter into their spirit was to experience something like a religious conversion. You were not the same man afterwards. No one ever exercised a more potent sway over the inmost being of his disciple. The many whose temperament put them outside the charmed circles of Newman and Carlyle found a more temperate and prosaic leader in J. S. Mill. Even the disciples of Mill's school have shown a tendency of late to modify, if not radically to alter, the old tradition. Yet no one has arisen amongst them who can be compared in a literary sense with Mill. There may be more accurate, minute, and

comprehensive thinkers of his school. They have produced no books at all comparable in point of style, or as models of literary composition, with those in which Mill showed his masculine vigour as a thinker, his extraordinary fulness of mind, and his fascinating power of importing at least apparent lucidity into the darkest and most perplexed subjects. That thought has advanced in all the directions indicated by these names may be fully admitted; we can in a sense judge them from a superior standpoint and mark their limitations. But have we—the products of the later generation—produced any leaders so capable of erecting permanent literary landmarks?

Make a sharp transition. In those days, about thirty years ago, there were novelists of the first rank; writers such that the announcement of a new publication by them sent a thrill through every corner not inaccessible to circulating libraries. In the period from twenty to forty years removed from us, we had been startled by the new power revealed, though not for the first time, in *Vanity Fair*; and had eagerly accepted *Pendennis* and the *Newcomes* and *Esmond*. A foolish controversy, still sometimes continued, was raging as to the rival merits of their author and the contemporary author of *Pickwick* and *David Copperfield*. Wiser persons enjoyed both, and there were few months in which one did not greet with delight the appearance of a number of one serial in the familiar yellow, and another in the equally familiar green. Then the whole literary world had just been thrown into an excitement, never since paralleled, by the sudden apparition of *Jane Eyre*. A greater writer was making a more gradual approach to fame by the publication of the *Scenes of Clerical Life*. And besides Thackeray, Dickens, Miss Brontë, and George Eliot, a number of writers, some happily still living, provided agreeable entertainment in the intervals, and might be regarded as at least worthy subordinates. Lord Lytton—to mention only the dead—was publishing *My Novel* and *The Caxtons*, which are at least excellent specimens of good literary craftsmanship; Mrs. Gaskell produced *Ruth* and *Mary Barton*; and Kingsley wrote *Alton Locke* and *Hypatia* and *Westward Ho!* books which, if they will not bear the closest inspection in all respects, show at least a vigour and originality for which it would be hard to produce a later parallel. It is rather dangerous, perhaps, to ask whether we have such novelists now. But, allowing every reader to select his favourite or pair of favourites to be worthy champions of the moderns, he will find it hard to fill up a list capable of doing battle against their predecessors. Have we any counterbalancing considerations to suggest? Is there any department of literature in which we can claim a preponderance as distinct as our predecessors in this direction? In poetry, philosophy, fiction, we seem to have the worst of it. There is yet one direction in which we might make a stand. History should be a strong point, for in history we are approaching the scientific field; and in history nobody can doubt that we have made in some respects enormous advances. The Anglo-Saxon and Charlemagne

have been nearly abolished; and that is understood to mean that we have made a great advance in accuracy of research. But, from the literary point of view, it may be doubted whether we could meet without misgiving such a champion as Macaulay. The difference is significant. It is easy to point out Macaulay's glaring defects; the limitation of his political views; the offensive glitter of his style; and, in that respect, at least one living historian seems to be justly his superior. Yet when we read the *Essays* and the first part of the *History* we are less confident. The extraordinary fulness of knowledge, the command of materials, the power of grouping events and forming them into a clear and flowing narrative, are so undeniable that we are inclined to admit, in spite of all his faults, that he is unapproached by his successors in the power which goes to a monumental work. Modern writers seem to be sometimes the victims of an indigestion caught at the State Paper Office; sometimes they are tempted to tack together a series of brilliant pamphlets, and trust to fortune to make it a history. At present they seem scarcely capable of turning out work so massive, so finely executed, and marked by such unity of design as their forefathers. And yet we may admit that, in history at least, we have the advantage of a serious and energetic body of students really achieving good work, and at least accumulating the material of literary triumphs. Casting a rapid glance over these facts, the conclusion seems to be inevitable. The literary, like the natural, harvest has been of late blighted and scanty. We have passed from a land flowing with milk and honey into a comparative desert. As Johnson said when he went from England to Scotland, we see the flower dying away to the stalk. In a utilitarian and scientific sense we may be making progress; in the regions of imagination and artistic achievement—so far at least as literature is concerned—we have been progressing backwards. Great names are scarce; there is hardly a leader left who can stir the enthusiasm of the young and make us feel that the torch of intellectual light is being delivered into worthy hands. If we would not flatter the time, must we not confess that we are at least crossing a barren zone; and at present without any distinct glimpse of a fertile region beyond?

Admitting the fact, we can of course be in no want of explanations. Any popular preacher—in or out of the pulpit—will supply us with as many as we please. It is all the fault of democracy, says one self-appointed prophet. How should culture, refinement, polish, be appreciated in art when they fail to govern society? They are the fruits of a settled order, of a select circle trained in accepted traditions of refinement, able to perceive and appreciate delicate shades of manner and meaning, and revolted instinctively by the coarse and glaring. How can such plants thrive in the social hubbub and anarchy of to-day? As we expect the candidate in a popular constituency to attract voters by the graces of a courtier under the old *régime* as expect a modern writer to emulate the polish of his forefathers. The loud-voiced noisy spouter,

the man who does not stick at trifles or bother himself about logical consistency, who can give his hearers good potent stimulants instead of delicate flavours, is the man for a mob; and he will hustle the more thin-skinned orator, with his fine perceptions and wire-drawn scruples, out of the arena. What encouragement is there for doing delicate work when you work for the million who prefer noise to harmony, and cannot be bothered to draw distinctions between a Tennyson and a Tupper? Why put the labour of years on producing that exquisite polish which makes all the difference between the finest and the coarsest work, but which is utterly overlooked by the vulgar? The finest work, like the coarsest, will at best gain five minutes' attention between the leading article and the sensation novel. What chance that it will be appreciated? You have to learn before all things the art of advertising; for you are one of a mob of writers all struggling for attention, and to advertise is essentially to attract buyers of your goods by inducements independent of their intrinsic merits. And if your aspirations are of the highest, how are you to maintain the necessary quietness of soul in the bustle and confusion of modern life? Make the least error, and the whole band of admirers and puffers and genial critics makes a dead set at you, crying out "More of that!" and inciting you to be faithless to yourself, and stimulate your little vein of spontaneous originality into feverish and morbid activity.

Such declamation may be continued indefinitely. When we ask calmly what it means, we may see reasons for doubt. Let us "clear our minds of cant," and above all of the cant of the pessimists. Is it not the plain truth that every social order has its characteristic dangers? The danger in ages of calm and refinement is the danger of sterility. The artist becomes finicking and over-critical. He is such a delicate plant that he ceases to bear fruit. He becomes, like Gray, so sensitive that it takes him two years to write a score of delicate stanzas. For the true critic we have the exquisite connoisseur, who cannot bear the crumpled rose-leaf, and values mere technical quality at the expense of power and abundance. If we are in a period when the opposite faults are more common, we must not overlook our advantages. The greatest writers, said Scott somewhere—and he had no doubt personal reasons for the remark—have been the most voluminous. They have, in other words, been men so full of superabundant energy that they dashed out their work at white-heat, now making a blunder and now achieving a masterpiece. Not only Scott himself, but Shakespeare, may be quoted in illustration. Such men and many others wrote impetuously, and the best of them wrote at periods when the world was throbbing with passionate excitement, and the old school of refined critics was for the time being thrust to the wall. Revolutions in the world of thought, as in the political world, bring great men to the front by sheer force of contagious enthusiasm. Now is it true that we may regret the lines which Shakespeare neglected to blot, and the slovenly style of too many of Scott's

productions? Perhaps, if you are a delicate connoisseur, you would rather be a Landor than a Scott, and dine with a select party a century after you are dead instead of feasting in a crowded hall of the living. We need not dispute the point; though probably the ultimate judgment of the world will be that the men who thrilled and moved their contemporaries should really have the preference to the manufacturers of exquisite jewellery for the select few. But, in any case, the difficulty for our present purpose remains. We are as wanting in Scotts and Byrons at least as much as in Landors or Keatses. Indeed, it might be plausibly maintained that we are more wanting. Mr. Tennyson, whatever else he may be, is amongst the most exquisite artists who ever wrote in English; and it would be easy to quote other instances. Indeed, the prevailing fault of our most popular school at the moment is the tendency to an excessive appreciation of the more delicate and effeminate forms of art. Why have we not a Scott pouring forth three Waverley novels in a year, or a Byron writing *Giaours* and *Childe Harolds* and *Don Juans* at the full speed of his pen? The adulation which surrounds a popular author to-day is scarcely more exciting or unsettling than that which led Scott and Byron to over-hasty production. If the excitements of the present time, the vast changes of thought and society, which in the dawn of the revolutionary movement brought out such a host of vigorous writers, do not produce the same effect, it is certainly not because the questions at issue are less momentous, or men less profoundly interested. Nor, again, can it be that the intellect of to-day has become frivolous and superficial. Whatever our dearth of great names, there was never a time in which more severe and strenuous intellectual labour was bestowed upon extending and modifying our thoughts upon all topics in which thought can be exercised. Never were there more competent and thoroughgoing students of philosophy and history and science. Where there was one serious labourer in any such field half a century ago, there are now twenty. Many of them at least have withstood the temptation to be superficial and merely popular. Why do they produce no such leaders as of old?

An answer is often given by saying that the social is but the counterpart of a spiritual class; that men's minds are unsettled upon all topics; that every opinion is disputed and discussed; and that even men of settled convictions are chilled and paralysed by the absence of general sympathy. The text upon which Carlyle and Mr. Ruskin have preached so eloquently and forcibly might of course be expanded indefinitely. We might add in particular that it is as applicable to artistic as to philosophical movements. The queer phenomenon called æstheticism is an indication of its importance. Your true æsthete is a cultivated person who has reached a kind of artistic indifferentism. He has learnt to sympathise with so many forms of art that he really sympathises with none. As knowledge has extended, we have become familiar with all forms of the beautiful; we have played like children with

“revivals” of all kinds; we have been by turns classical and romantic; we have aped the mediæval and the renaissance, and even the “Queen Anne” period, with earnestness enough for masqueraders; and the æsthete, bewildered and jaded, has come to the conclusion that, on the whole, there is no principle at all; that every artistic creed has pleased in its turn; that none can be said to be right or wrong; that whatever pleases is therefore right; and consequently that the only principle is to have as many and as keen tastes as possible. The misfortune is that in this hopeless chaos of tastes and fashions we lose sight of the one important thing, ourselves; that all our tastes have become affectations, and that we have lost precisely that spontaneity which is the universal condition of excellence in any form of art whatever. We change restlessly and hopelessly; we have a taste for everything and a genuine enthusiasm for nothing; all our work is more or less of a sham; and our poets, who can turn out a very pretty ballad or mediæval romance, or Elizabethan drama or classical idyl, somehow find one thing impossible—namely, to give full utterance to the hopes and fears and aspirations of living men.

Granting all that may be said upon this score, there yet remains a difficulty. Why should this be so? Why, if the old ideals have become hollow and we have not framed ideals of our own, should we not take refuge in a downright realism? Life, surely, is as interesting as ever; the impulses which move men’s hearts and convulse the whole social order manifest themselves at least as clearly to every reflective mind. If we cannot take much interest in classical mythology, and the old gods and goddesses appear to us as bloodless phantoms, surely a downright portraiture of the men and women of to-day, of the joys and sorrows felt by the millions of our struggling cities, should excite more interest than ever in the thoughtful, who are daily forced to consider the practical problems involved. If we are tired of knights in buff jerkins, we have by no means heard the last of *Alton Locke*, and the yeast of which Kingsley spoke is working and fermenting with unprecedented vehemence. Some writers seem to accept this principle; though unluckily, in certain of its manifestations, realism and naturalism seem to mean a steady contemplation of the nasty. But in England at least realism does not appear to thrive. If poetry shrinks from such work, it should surely be suitable to novelists. Thackeray painted the upper classes of his day, and Dickens caricatured their inferiors, and each, after his kind, showed astonishing penetration. But they seem to have left no successors. We have some most graceful and delicate portrait-painters, and many who can give us pleasant domestic interiors, and others who can interest grown-up children with extravagant “sensation” stories. What we do not see is the power possessed, for example, by Fielding in an eminent degree, of laying bare the real working forces of society, and making us know better the actual men and women of our own day. We do not want tracts or blue-books in the shape of fiction; but we do want to get a downright masculine insight into living realities, and it

can hardly be said that we are often so lucky as to get it. Carlyle accused Scott of writing merely for the purpose of "harmlessly amusing indolent, languid men." It was the kind of judgment which your true Puritan forms upon all forms of story-telling; and it is far from being just to Scott's noblest work. But in our own day it would seem that not only is any high aim become inconceivable, but that there is an express aversion to anything which implies thought in the writer and requires it from the reader. Novelists who make any demands upon our attention must generally be content to go unread.

If, then, we might argue from the absence of great names, of reputations due to lofty purpose and strenuous endeavour, we might come to the conclusion that frivolity and littleness is the mark of our time. Some people accept that conclusion, as, indeed, there never was an age which was not pronounced by contemporary moralists to be unprecedentedly deficient in virtue and high purpose. To ask whether such a melancholy conclusion would be justifiable just now upon other grounds would be to affect an impossible omniscience. To draw such an inference, however, from the grounds here considered would be rash, or rather plainly erroneous. It is so far from being true that the absence of great elevations implies a decline of the general standard that the reverse is in many cases demonstrable. If we have not great teachers, it is not because inquiry is less eagerly pushed, whatever else may be the cause. It is just the coincidence between the marked increase of intellectual activity and appreciation of beauty in some directions, and the absence of great artists and great leaders of thought, which makes the problem really curious and interesting. But if it be asked, what then is the explanation? there are only two answers to be suggested—namely, that we do not know, and that it does not greatly matter. We do not know, probably we shall never know, what are the causes and the indications of the great intellectual harvests. Who can tell why at one moment there arises a group of eminent men, producing masterpieces for all future times, and why the group dies out and leaves no successors? Who can say why Shakespeare flourished in one generation, and no Englishmen have ever since been able to write more than second-rate dramas? Why the last half of the eighteenth century was barren even in the kind of poetry in which its early years were so prolific? Why, again, the group of great writers in the first years of this century have left so few worthy successors? After the event we can of course suggest some kind of explanation, especially that kind of explanation which consists in stating the facts over again in different language. We can point to some crisis in thought or in social development which must have stimulated men's minds to unusual activity, inasmuch as we know that, as a matter of fact, it did so. But those who have read philosophical speculations upon such topics most attentively will be the first to admit how unsatisfactory and superficial are the explanations which they offer. We can only say in the vaguest way that in the mental as in the physical world there are

periods of sudden blossoming, when the vital forces of nature are manifested in the production of exquisite flowers, and after which it again passes into a latent stage. But so long as there is no reason to assume any diminution of vitality, there is no reason for inferring that a temporary obscurity will not be followed by new flashes of light. Perhaps the Shakespeare of the twentieth century is already learning the rudiments of infantile speech, and some of us may live to greet his appearance, and probably—for we shall then be twenty years older—to lament the inferiority of the generation which accepts him. Who, again, can tell? And what, let us add, does it matter? Can we not rub along pretty well without contemporaries of the highest excellence? Thought is moving somehow, and mankind is trying to assimilate the new ideas which have been slowly drilled into its thick heads. And what is the real value to mankind of even the highest literary excellence? Is it not after all a luxury—an amusement—a feather in the cap of a nation, but something which has but a very small relation to its true interests? How far does its influence penetrate below that cultivated stratum which naturally takes itself to be the one stratum worth considering, but is, in reality, no such matter? How many people were there even during the period of the greatest men who really studied or in the least degree understood their works, or even knew of their existence? When we say that a great man influences thought, is it not much nearer the truth to say that he expresses rather more exquisitely conclusions which would have been rendered in a more clumsy fashion without him? Is he not rather an effect than a cause, and an effect of no very great importance to the bulk of mankind? Walk through the streets of London for a day and ask how many men you meet who have really the slightest appreciation of, say, Mr. Darwin, or anything more than a vague impression that he somehow considered men to be a kind of monkey? And, whatever the importance of his theories, is it not notorious, and, indeed, the very secret of their importance, that he was but just ahead of numerous competitors aiming at the same goal? What can be said of mere literary reputations: of your Shakespeares and Dantes and Homers? Putting aside the great mass to whom they are mere names, or at the most represent a kind of superstitious tradition, what are they even to the few who study them? Analyse the life of your æsthetic critic who lavishes his adulation upon their shrines, and find out, if you can, how much of his real life, of the interests which occupy his mind and determine his conduct, are really due to the poems which he professes to idolise. Have their writings been polestars or mere playthings to amuse leisure hours in the interval of more serious interests? We can do very well, for a time, without new stars of the first magnitude, and content ourselves with those of past ages, believing contentedly, if we please, that so long as the energy of the race continues unabated, it will from time to time, though at what time we cannot say, throw out again, as of old, a group of dazzling luminaries.

Back from the Road.

It is only just back from the road, that, ankle-deep in mud in winter and in dust in summer, creeps down a hill away to a little town, crowned by an old, old church, and washed by the broad blue sea. But it might be miles from anywhere, so dense is the gloom, so great is the quiet that surrounds the place, and appears like an intangible wall keeping off evil intruders. Another wall exists, crowned in summer by many-coloured snapdragons, that grow all along the top, and with every niche full of moss, and here and there a hart's-tongue fern or the tiny spleen-wort, and when we push open the faded green door, and come out into the square before the house, we are insensibly reminded of sixty years ago, and tread softly lest we should arouse sleepers, and awake them rudely to the fact that time has gone on, although they have remained stationary. The place is beautifully kept : there is not a weed on the gravel-path or in the flower-beds, quaintly bordered as they are by a notched bone edging, made from the bones of cow's ankle-joints in a way that is never seen now, and where columbines and Canterbury bells are nodding to each other in the soft wind : while beyond the deep green lawn a tiny fountain rises and falls monotonously and musically under the shadow of a dark broad-branched cypress, that is as the very embodiment of resignation and prayer, and seems the guardian spirit of the place. The lawn slopes quite down to the river, that appears to run slower here, before dashing over the weir away out to the sea, beyond the sand-banks that glitter and gleam like silver in the bright sunshine ; and on one side of the lawn is a paddock separated from the garden by a wire-fence, on which an old pony rests his head and watches us, sure that we shall remember him and rub his ears in the way he particularly affects, and that reminds him of early days and the dear young master he loved ; but he too has learned to wait, and only turns his eyes as we walk up and down, and evinces no impatience, sure that what to-day lacks will be supplied by to-morrow, and if not then, at latest the day after. Indeed, the whole place suggests waiting, as if life existent here, in bee, or bird, or flower, paused for a while, expectant that, some day or other, ripple of laughter or chime of voices would ring out, and fill the silence with human life again. There is no hint or touch of death : even in autumn, when the road outside is strewn with dead leaves and twigs and beech-mast, inside the wall are no signs of coming winter, for the shrubs are evergreen, and the cypress and ilexes change their raiment unnoticed, save by the gardener, who might be a brownie, so unperceived is he, and so fond of working at early

dawn, when the windows of the house have their blinds drawn, and no one can look at him as he sweeps, and weeds, and brushes. The house itself is square and commonplace, with thin white pillars supporting a somewhat crooked porch, at which you, perchance, might even smile; but to us who know all the secrets it represents the united efforts of the young pair who designed it, and saw it carried out proudly beneath their own eyes, as a shelter below which they could sit hand in hand, and watch the baby-boy play and laugh on the lawn, underneath their seat, secure that in so watching him he would not stray down to the river, or wander away to stroke his pony in the paddock: outside the porch is a silent, wide, dark hall, cool in summer, by reason of its marble pavement and shaded, open windows, and hung on each side with soft-toned copies of well-known Italian pictures, done years ago by the bride and bridegroom on their lengthened honeymoon, and brought home with infinite peril—so she says, smiling, even now—across land and sea, to deck their home, now building for them in this quiet, beautiful corner of England. It is curious to note how insensibly, but surely, houses become exactly like their owners: naturally the mere furnishing of them gives them a stamp of individuality, but time does more than this; for as months and years go by, the walls seem to inhale some of the vitality of their inhabitants, and become warmed and almost living as the same people year after year pass their days and nights between them. Or else, how account for the blank expressionless look of an ordinary hotel, passed through by different folks, not dwelt in, or cared for, but simply used as a shelter? or for the warm, crowsy, genial face of another one, lived in by generations of the same family, and each corner of which has its own story and its own associations? or yet, again, for the aspect of this same house, should it change hands—ay, even keeping the same furniture? for then does it not seem cold and resentful, as it puts on a very different aspect to greet those to whom 'tis only a house, and not, as it was erstwhile, a store-place of memories, nay, even a temple sacred to the holiest of holies—a happy, honoured home? Dreaming here on the threshold of the one place we would bring before you, there is no limit to this fancy; for the house, built as it was in love and smiles, and consecrated by loss and sorrow in the lapse of years, bears out entirely our theory: not even the veriest iconoclast of these days of ours could help realising it, and pausing, bare-headed, on the doorstep, ere rushing in to see if he could secure something high-art or Queen Anne with which to mock at—though he knows it not—his own well-loved shams and Tottenham Court imitations, that yet lead his soul from entire revelment in crude blues and reds, to better, because quieter, things. For not even he could help feeling the repose and resignation that could ever be found here, and although he may turn away disgusted when he sees the faded, gaudy Brussels carpets of sixty years ago, and feel conscious that there is nothing here that will harmonise with his surroundings, he will allow

there is something felt, but not expressible, that causes him not to sneer at the poor ugly old things, and that somewhat curiously makes him think of his mother, and the days when money did not represent the be-all and end-all of life, and when hurry, that kill-joy of the present, was not for him, and he had leisure to enjoy the sense of life, and the thousand sounds and scents that make up one's very early recollections. But although we may enter the house, and reverently commune with the past among its shadows, he cannot come in yet, for only yesterday did the mistress leave her quiet, well-loved home for a quieter and better-affectioned one in the beautiful little churchyard, where the snowdrops grow wild all spring, and make it look as if angel's wings enfolded it, and so her presence still seems to linger here; yet when to-morrow comes all the world will rush, nor realise that the auctioneer's Lot I. and Lot II., that means to them but a sordid bargain, represent the different notes in her song of life, as surely as the dots and lines of a sheet of music paper can mean an epithalamium, or a funeral march, or even a march to victory. For she was fifteen years old when the battle of Waterloo was fought, and remembered hearing the news the very day she began a wondrous work of art, that is now framed and hanging over the bookshelves in the drawing-room, as an evidence of what she did before she took to painting in the delicate subdued style that characterised her later days. It is indeed a curious device, and on a black cloth ground represents a cornucopia full of flowers manufactured from small atoms and in successive layers or petals of cloth—in some cases true to nature, while in others truth is sacrificed to sentiment, for a blue passion-flower is made from tiny morsels of a fine pale material of which the gown was composed which she wore the first time she met her future husband, and the white silk honeysuckle, perfect in form if not in hue, is made from the soft shawl that enfolded her one baby the day he opened his eyes on this calm corner of a noisy world. It took her years to complete, for many events passed by, and she forgot from time to time her handiwork; but as life gradually schooled the somewhat impulsive maiden, forming her into the calm matron, well-balanced in mind and manner, she deemed it wrong to have aught incomplete that she had once commenced, and so finished it, and hung it up above the bookcase, proud, though she confessed it not, that she, who was thought unfeminine, because she could do most things best, as companion to the man she loved, had thus vindicated her character, and had given proof that she could do frivolous and womanly sewing should it be necessary for her so to do, as well as, if not better than, the most blushing, retiring wife or maiden in her neighbourhood.

The screen in front of the just extinguished fire has no such happy memories as these, for it was begun and ended in feverish anxiety to find, in constant employment that had no dual associations about it, some other object for contemplation than the dead faces of the husband and child, who perished together in the river below the garden, and who

were brought home and laid in the chamber above this one just five-and-fifty long weary years ago; for how could she paint, when beside her easel stood his; or ride, when his horse was neighing impatiently for him in the stable; or think of reading the book when his paper-knife was still where he had put it, and from whence it was never removed for many years, and then only by accident, of which she seemed to take no notice, though we who loved her, knew well what the heedless action of a young child had done? Nay, rather, she seemed to take to the child; and after time went by, and she had been thirty years a widow, he used to be here always as a grown man of five-and-thirty, and his boy rode the old pony who to-morrow will be shot kindly, for there is none to love or tend him, now his friends are dead. But the screen represented to her a passage from passionate despair to calm hope and prayerful waiting, and to her every stitch represented its own place in the progress—here false stitches displayed backsliding, and there a well-formed, fully-shaded rosebud spoke hopefully of religion conquering natural agony, and hope shining where human eyes saw nothing save blackness and despair. To-morrow the screen will doubtless be sold as rubbish, and may be bought for the glass and frame, and hold some crewel-work of to-day, wrought by machinery, or in hurried single-stitch, without scarce a thought to last a little time; and the work she did may be burned as useless, and we wonder if, when we despise old handiworks and do away with them, we unwittingly pain some tender Shade, who may yet linger awhile or at times amongst us, and almost believe that we do, so tender do we feel towards all the things she made. We feel a pang while we gaze around us, and know that soon all will be dismantled and despised; for none is old enough to be in the fashion, while all is too old to be so useful that it must be kept. In the folds of the long chintz curtains in the drawing-room her child may have played hide-and-seek; his little face, that, painted by Leslie, hangs over his mother's chair, and that can never cease to be the face of a child, may have peeped out roguishly from the faded lilies of the valley among their pale green leaves, and smiled to him even while she chid him laughing; for she must have cared for them, for she always placed the folds herself and saw that they were carefully sent to be "calendered" every successive spring. The lilies are repeated on the carpet, with the addition of scarlet and blue and yellow roses; but all their hues are toned with time, and the sixty years have done nought to it save what is kindly, and, while unmarring the texture, have only softened down its asperities in a way that time alone has, and that he often employs beneficially to us, too impatient, too irritable mortals. The furniture is solid and heavy, from the great sideboard with the cellaret beneath—so like a tomb that we distinctly remember feeling ourselves impelled irresistibly to bury our dolls therein—to the great four-post mahogany bedstead in which she slept night after night, all her long quiet lifetime; and we cannot bear to think of the lodging-house parlours and chambers in which it must

end its days. But although we cannot save it all, some one, we know, will buy the contents of that little inner room, that seems the heart of the house, broken, maybe, but still beating where she always said her many prayers, and where her son slept and played those five short years of his life. Here is his rosewood crib, with fluted pillars, loose in places, and easily turned in their sockets, that speak of his restless little fingers, with one side that lets down with a sound that had its own meaning to her ears, and that, caused once by a new housemaid, who knew no traditions, brought to her eyes torrents of tears, though forty years had gone by since the child died; and here, in a shelf over the fireplace, is a row of small worn books that, bought for him, have been read by all the child-visitors she so dearly loved, and that represented to her her own boy. Any child now happy in the thousand and one lovely and artistic picture-books that crowd our nurseries, would disdainfully turn away from these poor, faded little volumes: their *Beauty and the Beast* has pages a foot wide, and designs that we long to see reproduced in our dress and houses, while this one has thin brown paper, and rough woodcuts representing *Beauty* in the dress of the Empire, with a long scarf round her shoulders, and gloves ample in length for a modern beauty's requirements; while the *Beast* is like nothing so much as a great Newfoundland dog. This stands by the little collection of anecdotes of *Miss Lydia Lively*, which is published in 1802 by Darton, Harvey and Darton, and bears on its pages evidences of profound study, inasmuch as little pencil x x's show exactly how much of these anecdotal pages constituted a lesson; and bleared round patches on the thin paper disclose further that the readings were not always without tears; while rhymes for the nursery, an epitome of Scripture history, the *Stranger's Offering*, and the *Parents and Teachers' Catechism*, of dates ranging from 1802 to about 1810, tell that they belonged to her own childhood; and so keep distinct memories from the universal *Primer*, and original poems, the date of which is 1826. Another little book, bound in rough red binding, with a wavy line across it, has lost its title-page, but is inscribed in her tremulous, fine Italian hand, "*The Child's Book*," and contains poems and pictures of the simplest and crudest, if the most moral designs. We may save the contents of this little room from the auctioneer's hammer possibly, but as we look round we wonder if, when we are gone too, and our belongings in their turn are scattered, there will be any of the aroma of the past left among them. This whole place appears to us full of the most delicate fragrance, full of hope or love, or pain or fear; and is like some rare perfume enclosed safely in a crystal flask, that must be shattered to-morrow when the world comes in to buy and sell. We may catch a few drops as the bottle breaks, but it cannot last; once it is dispelled, all must vanish like a dream, or like the life that was lived in all its various phases within these walls. And so from this we come to wonder why we should ever be vexed, or worn, or suffer, when 'tis all for such a little space; and when life has to be let

to run its course, however much we try to stem the stream, and call out against the inevitable. The river runs, and best are those who go on their way with it quietly—not rushing, neither expecting too much, and rather resting, like a caged bird does, once the first vain struggles are over, quiet, yet watchful for escape, which oft comes not until death opens our prison door. Thinking like this, we cannot envy the dwellers in great cities, who may not stay awhile without seeming to throw out of gear all that complex machinery they call society ; even while we regret more sadly than ever all we shall lose when we can no longer find a resting-place, back from the road.

J. E. PANTON.





"EIGHTH, LOOK AT ME!—LISTEN!"

No New Thing.

CHAPTER XVI.

MATERNAL INFLUENCE.



WHEN Mr. Brune escaped from the presence of the justly incensed Mrs. Winnington, he shaped his course for home without further delay. Under the circumstances, he no longer cared to search the house for his son, being in some fear of drifting into an embarrassing situation, and thinking, too, that it would be best to let the young fellow choose his own time for making any revelations that might have to be made.

He had not, however, proceeded very far on his way through the gathering gloom when he was arrested by a shrill whistle; immediately

after which some one crossed the adjacent meadow at a slinging trot, and, taking the hedgerow in his stride, landed neatly in the muddy lane.

"Oh, there you are!" said Mr. Brune. "They told me you were up at the house, but I couldn't find you anywhere about."

"I saw you starting; so I thought I might as well catch you up," answered Walter, passing his arm through his father's; and so they walked on for a couple of hundred yards or so in silence.

"I say——" began Walter at length.

"Well; what do you say?"

Facility of expression had never been among Walter's gifts. He thought for a little longer, and then made a fresh start with—

"I—er—I've got a sort of a secret to tell you."

"Ah!" remarked Mr. Brune, "you may well say a sort of a secret. A secret, I take it, is a matter known, at the most, to two persons; when a third is let in, it becomes, as you say, a sort of a secret; but

when an interested party happens to have overheard the whole business from beginning to end, it is no longer any sort of a secret at all."

"Eh?"

"You need not give yourself the agony of searching for appropriate words in which to tell your tale. I have heard it already—and several details which I fancy you would not have thought it necessary to communicate to me into the bargain. What possessed you to choose that room of all others in the house to make a declaration in? I remember that, when I was a boy, I used often to creep to the end of the corridor in hopes of seeing some exciting episode take place beneath me; but nothing ever came of it. Mrs. Winnington has had better luck."

"Mrs. Winnington? Good Lord! She wasn't there when—when——"

"She was, though—didn't miss a word of it. And now that I begin to realise what the scene must have been, I can't help wishing that I too could have been concealed somewhere and watched her face," said Mr. Brune, bursting into a hearty laugh.

"Oh, it's all very well to laugh," remonstrated Walter; "but this is serious."

"The whole thing is undoubtedly serious," answered Mr. Brune, recovering his gravity. "At the same time, I don't know that the way in which Mrs. Winnington and I have come to a knowledge of it is not as good a one as another. It has saved a world of gradual explanations."

"Is she awfully angry?"

"Well, yes; she is rather angry, I believe; but that should hardly surprise you."

"Poor Edith!" muttered Walter; "how she will catch it! I have a sort of feeling that I ought to go back to the house at once."

"I have a sort of feeling that you will do no such thing, so long as I can hold you," returned Mr. Brune, keeping a firm grip of his son's arm. "My dear boy, you must allow parents and children to settle their differences between themselves. And, talking of that, doesn't it strike you that I may have a word or two to say to your marriage—or rather engagement?"

"Oh, of course. In fact, I was just going to tell you all about it. I know," continued Walter penitently, "that I have no business to think about marrying at all; but—but, in short, I couldn't help it."

"You have done what can't be helped now, at all events," observed Mr. Brune. "I don't blame you," he resumed, after a pause. "A son who has never troubled his father in any worse way than by falling in love with a girl who hasn't a sixpence, and who has an outrageous old mother, must be allowed to be a success, as sons go, and can fairly claim some indulgence. But, setting that consideration aside, it is a very open question whether I have any right at all to interfere with your plans, except as a friendly adviser. When you were a boy, you know, I used to make

you obey me, and never allowed you to ask questions or begin your sentences with a But."

Walter nodded. "It's the only way," he said.

"It is gratifying to me to have your approval," said Mr. Brune gravely. "Well, so long as it was necessary that I should be master, I believe I was a tolerably strict one; but a time always arrives when the old bird's functions come to an end, and the young ones must fly for themselves and shift for themselves. There isn't room for you in the old nest, and you must feather a new one as best you can. Or again, if you prefer a nest without feathers, what can I say? I can give you the benefit of my experience as to the comfort of nests of that description; but it isn't much use for me to scold."

"Bless you! you couldn't scold if you were to try for a twelvemonth," said Walter, giving his father's arm a squeeze; "you don't know the way."

"Anyhow, I am not going to scold. Nor am I going to remonstrate. Indeed, if there came to be a question of remonstrances between us, I am half afraid that it would be for me to receive, not to utter, them. I have not done my duty by you, Walter; though I believe I may say that I have intended to do it—if that is any excuse."

"My dear old man, what are you talking about? You have been the kindest father and the best friend any fellow could wish for," cried Walter warmly.

"Ah, well! You have a case against me, all the same. Things have not fallen out quite as they seemed likely to do when your mother and I agreed that you were to succeed me at the farm, instead of entering a profession like your brothers. To a certain extent I have been unfortunate; that is to say that I have neither made nor inherited what I expected to do; but, on the other hand, I have muddled away a lot of money. The upshot of it all is that, instead of being very comfortably off, I am a poor man and shall never be anything else. I hear people talk of making farming pay; but I can't say I have ever yet met a man who has accomplished the feat."

"I defy any man to make farming pay in these days," said Walter confidently.

"Well; but don't you see what this brings us to? The only thing that could enable you to support a wife and family would be my death; and goodness only knows how long I may not live. I am as strong as a horse and barely past the half-century."

"I only wish you may live another fifty years."

"Thank you very much; but fifty years is rather a long period to propose to a young lady for an engagement. How are you going to get out of that difficulty?"

Walter scratched his head, and answered with much candour that he was hanged if he knew.

Then Mr. Brune pulled a letter out of his pocket. "The afternoon post brought me this," he said, "and I was going to show it to you before

I heard anything about your love affairs. It is from William Boulger—your uncle William, whom you have heard of, but never seen, and who is now senior partner in the firm of Boulger & Co.—and he writes to offer an opening in the bank to one of my sons. He means one of the younger ones, no doubt, and I suppose the fact of the matter is that he has been quarrelling with his own people. A few years ago I should have said No, thank you; but now things look so bad that I thought I ought at least to let you hear of the proposal before declining it. As far as I understand him, it is only a clerkship that he offers; but he alludes to ‘probable advancement in life,’ which, I conclude, means eventual partnership. Now William Boulger is, or used to be, an infernally disagreeable fellow; but he is a man of business and a man of his word, and the chances are that, if anything, he means more than he says, rather than less. I think the matter might be worth your considering.”

“My dear father,” exclaimed Walter, “it is the very thing. What a stroke of luck! Write off to the old boy, and tell him I’m his man. I don’t mind confessing to you now that I *was* a little bit down about my prospects; but this will put everything right, depend upon it.”

Even in that uncertain light Walter could see that his father was looking at him in an odd, wistful way.

“What is it?” he asked. “You think I shan’t like the sort of work, eh?”

“My poor fellow, I don’t think about it; I know you will utterly hate and abhor it. You, who love the open air and the smell of the fields almost as much as I do, and outdoor sports a great deal more than I ever did—you to sit upon a high stool in the city, totting up figures from morning to night! Even the prospect of your dying a rich man could never reconcile me to such a notion.”

“I should be doing it with an object,” said Walter quickly.

“Well, yes; there’s that. And you can always throw it up, and return to your crust of bread and liberty. I want you to promise me, my boy, that you will do that, if you find the life intolerable. But I think, upon the whole, you would do wisely to accept the offer. You would be none the worse off for having given the thing a trial, and living in London will give you an insight into the ways of the world which you could never have acquired if you had vegetated down at Broom Leas all the days of your life. Only pray bear in mind that you will always have it in your power to escape.”

“And Edith?” said Walter, smiling.

“Ah—that indeed!”

Mr. Brune did not choose to tell his son how very little belief he had in the successful termination of that affair; still less was he disposed to try and convince the young fellow that this world only exists by virtue of continual change, that when the course of true love does not run smooth it very commonly ceases to run at all, and that nobody is much the worse after a year or two. There are things that one does not say

to women and children; and there are also things—this, at least, was Mr. Brune's view—that ought not to be said to young men. Innocence is sacred; and should not the illusions and enthusiasms of youth be sacred too?

Quand j'ai connu la vérité,
J'ai cru que c'était une amie ;
Quand je l'ai comprise et sentie,
J'en étais déjà dégouté.

Et pourtant elle est éternelle,
Et ceux qui se sont passés d'elle
Ici-bas ont tout ignoré.

As a man grows older he inevitably learns much respecting his own nature and that of his fellow-mortals which can hardly heighten his respect for the race; and probably few would care to surrender that sad knowledge; but who, on looking back, would wish that he had known at the age of twenty-three all that he knows now?

Mr. Brune, then, held his peace; and as for Walter, he spent the remainder of the evening in golden dreams, towards the realisation of which the obnoxious high stool was to act as a stepping-stone. The evening—if he had been in a frame of mind to pay attention to trifles—was not being passed in a very cheerful manner by the trio who sat round the fire near him; for Mr. Brune was silent and thoughtful, and Nellie, for some unexplained reason, thought fit to demean herself towards Mr. Stanniforth in such an exceedingly cold and haughty fashion that she succeeded at length in driving that good-natured and mystified gentleman clean out of the room to seek solace in tobacco. Walter may be pardoned for having failed to notice this by-play. He went up to bed in an exuberantly hopeful mood, and dreamt that he was senior partner in Boulger's bank, that he had just purchased back the estate of his forefathers, and that he was consulting Edith as to whether, when he got his peerage, he should call himself Lord Brune or Lord Longbourne.

The next morning, while he was smoking his pipe in the stable-yard after breakfast, a groom from Longbourne rode up, and delivered to him a note addressed in feminine handwriting, which brought his foolish heart up into his mouth.

"I was to wait for an answer, if you please, sir," said the man.

Walter moved away a few paces and tore open his letter, which did not prove to be from Edith, as he had half hoped that it might be; nor were its contents of a nature to raise an anxious lover's spirits. "Mrs. Winnington presents her compliments to Mr. Walter Brune, and would be glad to see him for a few minutes, if he will be so good as to call upon her between eleven and twelve o'clock this morning."

Walter faced about, and walked back to the groom. "Say, Mr. Walter Brune's compliments, and he'll turn up all right."

And shortly after having despatched this informal reply, our young friend set out in obedience to Mrs. Winnington's summons. He was

not much alarmed, but rather amused, at the absurdity of her writing to him in the third person. It seemed to him that she could not have felt her position to be an impregnable one when she threw up that flimsy species of earthwork. The fact was that he had been so accustomed to hearing Mrs. Winnington laughed at and made a fool of by Marescalchi that he hardly did justice to the good lady's inexorable will and strength of purpose, and had got a sadly mistaken notion into his head that, if he were only firm with her, she would falter and give way.

Yet, for all his stout-heartedness, he felt his hands growing cold and a sinking sensation about the region of the waistcoat as he drew nearer to the house. He had an uncomfortable suspicion that the butler, who admitted him, knew all; and when he was ushered into the same small room in which his father had been engaged with the enemy on the previous evening, he knew that he was looking defiant, and by no means wore that aspect of calm and courteous determination which he would fain have assumed.

Mrs. Winnington was sitting by the fire, reading the *Times*, and at a short distance off, Edith, with her back turned, was gazing intently out of the window at a large spruce-fir, the lower branches of which darkened the room. Walter had a moment of hesitation, not having been prepared to meet Edith, and being in some uncertainty as to the manner in which he ought to greet her. He got out of the difficulty by not greeting her at all—a course which she made the easier for him by never turning her head nor manifesting the slightest consciousness of his presence.

Mrs. Winnington rose with much majesty to her full height, and Walter, to show that he was not frightened, held out his hand, saying cheerfully, "Good morning."

But both the lady's hands were engaged in holding her newspaper, over which she bowed in a stately fashion, without speaking. Walter remained standing before her, thinking that he would allow her to fire the first shot; but as she chose to maintain a frigid silence, he presently took upon himself to open the proceedings by plunging *in medias res* with—

"I'm afraid you're not best pleased with me, Mrs. Winnington."

"Will you sit down?" she said, not deigning to notice his observation; and the young man took the chair pointed out to him, and sat with his elbows on his knees, twirling his hat, and wishing, perhaps, that the next quarter of an hour were well over.

"I need scarcely tell you," began Mrs. Winnington, "that it is not very pleasant to me to receive you, after what has occurred; but I have sent for you because it seemed to me desirable that our respective positions should be—er——"

"That we should know where we are, in short," suggested Walter, by way of helping her out in a friendly spirit.

Mrs. Winnington gave him one glance of mingled disgust and disdain,

but did not refuse to accept the interpolation. "You will probably agree with me," she went on, "that what has to be said had better be said in the fewest possible words. I shall purposely abstain from any comment upon your behaviour——"

"I should like you just to admit, though, that I have done the straight thing as far as you are concerned," interrupted Walter. "You are displeased and disappointed, and I'm sure I don't wonder at it; but when you speak of my behaviour, I think you ought to allow that I have not been guilty of any deception."

"Not guilty of any deception!" cried Mrs. Winnington, reddening. "Well, I can only say that I think you have behaved as deceitfully and dishonourably as——" Here, however, she came to a full stop. She was aware that she could not lose her temper without at the same time losing something of her dignity, and the occasion was one upon which dignity must be allowed to have the pre-eminence. "But that is not the question," she said, waving the subject away with a lofty sweep of the *Times*.

"Pardon me, but to my mind it is very much the question."

"Not the question," repeated Mrs. Winnington with increased emphasis. "It was not to put you upon your defence, or to listen to it, that I requested you to call here this morning. I am willing to take the most charitable view of the case, and to assume that you have, or think you have, a real attachment for my daughter." Mrs. Winnington brought out these last words with rather a wry face; but she had considered beforehand what she should say, and was resolute not to swerve from her line of attack. "And if that be so," she continued, "you will certainly not wish to cause her any needless pain or distress. It surely cannot be necessary that I should even mention such a thing as the possibility of your becoming engaged to her; your common sense will tell you that no father or mother could sanction an engagement where there were neither means nor prospect of any on one side or the other. The whole thing is a foolish boy-and-girl scrape which I am sure we should all be glad to forget. Edith has expressed to me her sincere regret and penitence" (here Walter started, and glanced at the figure by the window, which, he fancied, shivered ever so slightly), "and—in fact it is a case of least said soonest mended. Fortunately very few people know of the affair. Your father has been told of it, and for several reasons I thought it best also to tell my daughter Margaret, who is very anxious that there should be no breach between us and your father's family in consequence; but it need never, I should hope, go further. I cannot truly say that we shall be glad to see you often after this, and probably your own good feeling will prompt you to keep out of the way; but occasional chance meetings between you and Edith can hardly be prevented, and I wish you to give me your honour in her presence that you will never, by word or look, recur to—to what is past."

Walter was a good deal disconcerted. For anger and abuse he had been prepared, but not for the tone of studious moderation which Mrs.

Winnington had seen fit to adopt, and remembering that, not so many hours before, he had called her an awful old woman in her hearing, and had kissed her daughter under her very nose, he could not but feel that her self-restraint placed him at a considerable disadvantage. He was conscious, too, that, according to all received ideas, her case was a strong one, and his own a deplorably weak one.

"I'm not much of a hand at argument," he confessed at length, "and I can't put things as forcibly as you do, Mrs. Winnington. All the same I have something to say for myself, and I dare say I shall manage to get it said, if you'll give me time. As to my having no money, I'm afraid that's undeniable; and yesterday I couldn't have pretended that I had anything in the way of prospects to look forward to either; but, oddly enough, there has been a little change since then. My uncle—old Boulger, you know—has offered me a clerkship in his bank, and I've made up my mind to take it. I admit that that doesn't mean much pay for some years; but I believe he means to push me on, if I'm good, and I think I may fairly say that I have a chance of being comfortably off some day. I suppose I shall go up to London almost immediately, and never get away, except on Bank holidays, so there won't be much risk of those chance meetings that you mentioned."

Mrs. Winnington could not repress a faint murmur of satisfaction.

"All this is awfully vague, I know," Walter continued, "and perhaps I ought not to expect you to sanction a regular engagement, but——" Here a short laugh from Mrs. Winnington arrested him, and he looked up inquiringly.

"Oh, go on, pray go on," said she; "it is quite diverting to listen to you. You would prefer an irregular engagement, I suppose."

"What I was going to say was this: I must acknowledge that, under the circumstances, you have every right to send me about my business, but, for all that, I can't give Edith up at your bidding."

"Really," said Mrs. Winnington, "I do not understand you."

"Well, then, I must try to speak more plainly. I love Edith, and I know that she loves me; and, so long as that is so, I shall consider that we are bound to one another, though we may not be formally engaged. To tell you the truth, Mrs. Winnington, I have my doubts about her ever having expressed repentance to you in the way that you say she did. She may have told you that she was sorry for having vexed you, or that you should have overheard something of what passed between us yesterday; but that she ever said more than that is what I cannot believe."

"You are very insolent," returned Mrs. Winnington coldly; "but I suppose I must bear with you up to the end. Edith, my love, I wish I could avoid paining you; but I am afraid you will have to tell this—very extraordinary young gentleman that you wish to recall any foolish promise that he may have extorted from you."

Upon this Edith at last turned round, and Walter eagerly scanned her features. She was very pale; but she had not been crying, as her lover half hoped, half feared that she might have been, and when she spoke, it was in a steady, monotonous voice. She did not, however, once raise her eyes from the carpet.

"We must part, Walter," she said: "we have made a mistake. You know," she added presently, "I always told you that it was impossible—that it could not be."

"It can be, and it will be," cried Walter, who had now also turned rather white, "if we only have the pluck to be true to ourselves and to one another. It is not of your own free will that you are turning me off like this. Edith, look at me!—listen! I don't ask you to bind yourself formally; I don't even ask to see you, or to be allowed to write to you. I only entreat you to have patience and to wait. That sounds like asking a great deal; but if you really love me, it is asking nothing. I won't give up hope until I hear from your own lips that you don't care enough for me to bear a time of uncertainty and waiting."

"Edith!" said Mrs. Winnington solemnly.

The girl looked up, cast an imploring glance first at her mother and then at Walter, and dropped her eyes again, but said never a word.

"Edith!" repeated the instrument of destiny by the fireplace, in somewhat sterner accents.

This time the victim responded to the call. "It is quite true," she said slowly, "I don't care enough——" Her voice died away. Then, all of a sudden, she exclaimed passionately, "Oh, why can't you believe what I say? Why don't you go away? You ought not to persecute me so!"

"I hope," said Mrs. Winnington quietly, "that you are now satisfied."

Poor Walter was not in a state to make any reply. The floor seemed to be rising and falling before him; the walls were spinning round; he had to clutch at the mantel-piece for support. There was a long minute of profound silence, after which he heard Mrs. Winnington's voice, as from the far distance, saying, "Don't you think you had better leave us now?"

He made a strong effort to recover his self-command. "Certainly," he answered. "I have nothing more to do here. It—it's a pity this wasn't said a little sooner. I had no intention of—persecuting anybody. Good-bye, Mrs. Winnington. Good-bye, Edith, and God bless you always!"

And so, somehow or other, he found himself out in the hall, and was aware that the butler was surveying him with an air of grave surprise.

"Good-bye, Wilson," he said; "you won't see me down here again for many a long day, I expect. I'm going up to London to make my fortune, Wilson."

"Indeed, sir? I am sorry to hear it, sir," answered the man.

"What, sorry to hear that I am going to make my fortune? You must know precious little of the world then, Wilson. Why, bless your soul, money is the only thing worth living for. There's nothing that money can't buy—houses, and lands, and friends, and wives, too, if you want them. Between you and me, Wilson, this world's going to the devil pretty quickly."

Probably Wilson knew perfectly well what was the matter; otherwise he might have been inclined to suspect that young Mr. Brune had been drinking a little more than was good for him. And indeed Walter's gait, as he hastened across the lawn, was scarcely that of a sober man.

Before he had reached the boundary of the garden some one appeared suddenly from a by-path, and caught him by both hands.

"Oh, Walter!" exclaimed Margaret, with the tears in her eyes, "I am so very, very sorry."

Possibly there may have been something like tears in the young fellow's eyes, too; for he winked violently, and cleared his voice several times, without being able to make any articulate reply.

"I know that I have been a great deal to blame for this," Margaret went on penitently. "I ought to have foreseen what was likely to happen; but somehow I never thought of it until—until a short time ago."

Walter now managed to say that he had nothing to complain of, and blamed nobody. He had made a great mistake, and there was no more to be said.

Certainly there was not much to be said in the way of consolation. Had Walter declared himself determined to hope on against hope, Mrs. Stanniforth would have been ready to point out to him how wrong this was, and might even have been persuaded in the long run to write to him, every now and then, and let him have news of the beloved one's state of health—a point upon which he might reasonably be supposed to feel some anxiety; but as he chose to give up the game, it was not for her to quarrel with his submissiveness, and no doubt, matters being as they were, it was a good thing that he was about to vanish altogether from the scene. Margaret may have been inwardly a trifle disappointed; but she did not allow the existence of any such feeling to be inferred from her manner, and Walter gave her no time to add much more, one way or the other. He made her a somewhat incoherent speech, thanking her for all her kindness to him in past years, and hoping that she would not forget him, and so departed.

Margaret watched him out of sight, and then returned to the house, where her mother met her with—

"All's well that ends well. But, Margaret dear, I can't help saying that I hope this will be a warning to you to be just a little more careful about making all sorts of people welcome to the house. If anything of

this kind were to occur again, I am afraid it would be my duty to think seriously of settling down with dear Edith in a home of our own."

CHAPTER XVII.

NELLIE SPENDS AN EXCITING DAY.

IT is so common a failing, even among the wisest of mankind, to estimate what is probable by the measure of what is desirable, that Mrs. Winnington may be excused for having cherished a fond belief that all cognisance of the episode treated of in the last chapter might be confined to the five persons whom she knew to be already acquainted with it. No one, however, who has lived much in the country will suppose for one moment that a popular and widely-known young fellow like Walter Brune could leave the neighbourhood abruptly in order to seek employment in London, for which, both by tastes and training, he was notoriously unfitted—no one, I say, will believe that such a step as this could be taken without reasons, true and false, being speedily forthcoming to account for it. In this instance, the truth, or something not very unlike the truth, was known to the whole county in about a week;—in a space of time, that is to say, which would include one Sunday, one market-day, and at least one dinner-party, or other social gathering. Mr. Wilson, it may be assumed, would give his version of the affair to one set of persons, Mrs. Winnington's maid would communicate hers to another, while the groom who had ridden over to Broom Leas with the note for Walter would command the attention of a third. Starting from these humble sources, the news would infiltrate by the usual processes into a higher layer of society, and propagating itself by the mere fact of its existence, as the germs of certain diseases are said to do, would ere long penetrate into the most remote and least inquisitive quarters.

Thus it was that, within the brief period above indicated, a very general impression got abroad to the effect that poor young Brune had been abominably treated. His father, it was alleged, had turned him out of doors; Mrs. Stanniforth had forbidden him ever to show his face at Longbourne again; Mrs. Winnington had assailed him with a torrent of the coarsest abuse; and all this because, forsooth, he had ventured to raise his eyes to a girl who, after all, was in no way his superior, and who surely might have been contented with throwing him over when he had served her purpose of acting as a decoy-duck for more wary and wealthier suitors. It was unanimously concluded that the affair was discreditably to all concerned in it; and, as this is always a comfortable conclusion to arrive at, Walter's wrongs were discussed for a longer time and with greater relish than anybody's good fortune would have been.

It was well for Mrs. Winnington that she was both disliked and feared in the county, and that she had no friend within twenty miles

sufficiently intimate to undertake the delightful task of letting her know what pleasant things were being said about her. She was perfectly at ease in her mind, feeling assured that those in whom she had confided would best consult their own interest by keeping silence; and what better security for discretion could she have than that? Mr. Brune, if she had known it, had taken upon himself to let a sixth person into the secret; but that person was a safe one, and moreover could hardly have been kept long in ignorance of what had taken place.

Nellie showed no surprise when her father related the circumstances to her, but expressed herself upon the subject with a bitterness which rather astonished him, declaring that Walter was well out of it, and passing a sweeping condemnation upon the entire Longbourne set, Stanniforths and Winningtons alike.

"How horrid they all are!" she exclaimed; "Edith is not a bit better than the rest of them. Even Mrs. Stanniforth, good and kind as she is, is completely under the thumb of that detestable woman, and did not dare to say a word for poor Walter, whom they have driven into a choky London den, where he will pine, like a lark in a cage."

"Walter had made his choice on that score before he knew that he was to be rejected," observed Mr. Brune; "and you must learn to moderate your language, Nell, or people will set you down as a little termagant. I give you over Mrs. Winnington; but you needn't curse the whole tribe of Stanniforths. There's Tom, for instance; I call Tom a capital fellow."

"Do you?"

"Yes; don't you? I thought you and he had struck up a firm alliance when he was here."

"Oh!" said Nellie, "I liked him well enough in a sort of way; but I have no doubt that, below the surface, he is just like the others. And then he is such a bore with his philanthropic schemes."

"H'm! I may be very wrong; but I was under the impression that it was you who persuaded me, against my better judgment, to sign a petition for the total abolition of vivisection."

"Well, I know I did. When people have hobbies, the only way to save oneself from being tormented is to give in to them; and I told you at the time that it didn't the least signify, because nobody would think of looking at all those signatures."

"Yes, I remember that you made use of that remarkable argument. Poor Stanniforth! he won't worry you with any more hobbies; for I don't suppose we are likely to come across him again, unless, indeed, he pays them another visit at Longbourne. Do you know, I have sometimes thought that our worthy friend Mrs. Winnington would not be altogether displeased if he were to take a fancy to Edith."

Nellie burst out laughing with much apparent heartiness. "You dear, simple old father! Do you mean to say that you have only just found that out? Didn't you guess why Mrs. Winnington was so

desperately anxious to keep things quiet that she didn't even forbid Walter the house, and has had us twice asked to dinner since Mr. Stanniforth has been there? I was so glad that we could not go! I don't think I could have borne to walk in the old wretch's triumphal procession, like the captives of the Roman generals. Why, Edith is either engaged to Mr. Stanniforth now, or will be in a few days."

This conversation took place towards the end of September, at which time Mr. Stanniforth certainly had not compromised his future in the manner imputed to him. He had spent a week at Longbourne, and had then left with a precipitancy which did not lack significance. But of Mr. Stanniforth and his deeds and fortunes, Nellie had neither seen nor heard anything from the day on which he had quitted Broom Leas. During the last few days of his stay she had been pleased, as we have seen, to treat him with a haughtiness, not to say incivility, for which her conscience now began to call her to account. Looking back upon this dispassionately, it did seem somewhat unjust, and perhaps even unworthy, to have vented her temper upon the poor man because Mrs. Winnington had suggested impertinent possibilities with reference to him; but Miss Brune was not more prone than are the majority of her age and sex to look at things dispassionately, nor had she anticipated that her guest would take this snubbing in the manner that he had done. If it had been in her power to look down into the depths of her heart, she would have made a discovery which would have surprised her; for she would have found out that what she wanted was that Mr. Stanniforth should inquire into the cause of her changed demeanour, and, without receiving any answer—for of course he could not receive any—should by some means or other have arrived at a comprehension of it. But he had done nothing of that kind. He had asked no questions, nor had he once taken the trouble to call at Broom Leas after his change of quarters. He had simply (so it seemed to Nellie) shrugged his shoulders, and walked off, as a sensible man might be expected to do when out of patience with the caprices of a silly schoolgirl. Now it was by no means in this latter light that Miss Brune desired to be regarded by Mr. Stanniforth or anybody else: hence, possibly, the acrimony with which she had spoken of him behind his back.

During the succeeding six weeks Nellie had leisure enough and to spare for the duty of self-examination; but as this method of passing time is seldom satisfactory to young and healthy minds, she soon discarded it, and began to cast about her for occupation or amusement in one form or another. Of these two good things there was now, as it happened, an unwonted dearth in her small world. Out of all her tribe of brothers not one was at this time beneath the paternal roof, some being at school, some at sea; even Walter was away in London, where Philip also was hard at work, studying law after the fashion known to the reader. Mrs. Winnington, in search of second and third strings to her bow, had carried off Edith into the west of England. The neigh-

bourhood, too, which at the best of times was not a remarkably lively one, had entered upon the annual period of torpor which separated the last of the garden parties from the first of the winter dances.

All this tended to produce a feeling of melancholy which the season of the year was well calculated to deepen. The leaden skies, the bare, brown fields, the yellow leaves that fluttered down in showers with every gust of wind, the chrysanthemums and dahlias all dragged and forlorn—these were dismal objects to contemplate when one had little else to do, the livelong day, but to contemplate them. Every morning the low mists hung over the Cray valley, and every afternoon they crept slowly up to the higher ground, wrapping men and things in a moist and chilly embrace. Mr. Brune caught a bad cold in his head, and became a trifle querulous under the influence of it, declaring that this being out in all weathers would be the death of him, and that he missed Walter more every day.

“I shouldn’t catch colds in my head if I were not in such confoundedly low spirits,” he asserted; “and I shouldn’t be in low spirits if I had somebody to talk to.”

Upon this Nellie eagerly suggested that she should accompany her father on his daily rounds; but he negatived the proposition despondently.

“You can’t walk,” he said, “and there’s nothing for you to ride.”

“There’s Wasp,” said she.

Now Wasp was a powerful young horse which Walter had bought, some months before, with the intention of hunting him during the ensuing season. Nellie had been once upon his back; but he had given her so much trouble on that occasion that she had been forbidden to repeat the experiment.

“I won’t have you riding Wasp,” said Mr. Brune; “he is too much for you.”

“I should like to see the horse that was too much for me!” cried Miss Brune; and in truth she had a light hand and a firm seat, and had often been complimented upon her possession of these gifts.

“Very well, my dear, then you can look at Wasp as often as you please. I can’t afford to have my children breaking their arms and legs in these hard times.”

Nellie said no more; for she understood how to manage her father. And the remainder of this chapter will be devoted, amongst other things, to showing how wrong it is of children to manage their parents, and how foolish of parents to let themselves be managed by their children.

On the following morning the wilful young woman whose discomfiture will presently be related, privately ordered a side-saddle to be put upon Wasp; and when Mr. Brune went into the stable-yard after breakfast to mount his own steady cob, lo and behold! there was a diminutive person in a riding-habit, perched upon a sidling grey quadruped of gigantic size, waiting for him; and he was immediately greeted with a triumphant

"There now! didn't I tell you so? You see he's as quiet as a lamb."

Mr. Brune remarked that he was evidently getting into his dotage, and that the sooner he was dead and buried out of sight the better, since nobody any longer dreamt of paying attention to his express orders. He then sarcastically inquired whether a leading-rein had been provided for him; whereat the stable-helper, who was a young man of no manners or refinement, burst into a prodigious haw-haw, and had to be sternly rebuked by the coachman. Mr. Brune, meanwhile, had climbed a little stiffly into his saddle, and, after a few preliminary plunges on the part of Nellie's gallant grey, the pair rode off side by side, the old coachman hobbling out to watch them with a countenance expressive of admiration not unmingled with anxiety.

"Hope they won't meet any o' them blamed traction-engines," he muttered. "That there Wops he ain't the oss for a nervous rider, let alone a young lady."

Wasp was certainly not a pleasant animal to ride. His notion of getting over the ground was a series of senseless and objectless shies; and his notion of shying was a tremendous spring from one side of the road to the other, followed by sundry snorts and capers, which seemed intended to signify to his rider that nothing except a strong sense of duty restrained him from making a bolt for it. Nellie, however, rather enjoyed, or said that she enjoyed, these light-hearted performances, and would not hear of going back and having the saddles changed, as her father humbly requested her to do. So they potted about from field to field the whole morning, and had a gallop over a corner of the downs; after which the exuberance of Wasp's spirits subsided a little; insomuch that Mr. Brune was brought to confess that there didn't appear to be much harm in the brute after all. His confidence was at length so fully restored that, when they reached the bailiff's cottage, he was persuaded to dismount and look over some accounts which had been prepared for his perusal, leaving his daughter to wait outside.

Now waiting was what neither Nellie nor Wasp liked; and at the end of ten minutes one of them reached the limits of her stock of patience. She tapped on the window with her whip, and asked whether she might ride just a little way on the downs to keep herself warm, and come back again. Mr. Brune called out hastily, "No, no; stay where you are. I'll be with you directly." But perhaps his daughter did not hear him; for she quietly turned her horse's head away, and was soon cantering up the grassy slopes of a hill famed in those parts as offering a point of view whence the usual incredible number of counties can be distinguished on a clear day. She reined up her horse when she reached the crest, from which only one county, and not very much of that, was then visible; but if there was little in the way of scenery to attract the notice of the solitary horsewoman, she was rewarded, before many minutes were past, by the sight of something that caused her to jump, and cry "Oh!"

in accents of suppressed excitement which no landscape, however extensive, would have drawn from her.

Far away, beyond the misty valley at her feet, a small reddish-brown object suddenly flitted across the opposite hill-side, and was gone; and almost before the above ejaculation was uttered, there were the hounds, streaming after the fox, and presently a few red coats appeared in the wake of the hounds.

“Oh,” exclaimed Nellie, “*how* I should like to be with them!”

An instant later she would gladly have recalled a wish which had been only too fully shared by another spectator of the scene. Wasp, whose cocked ears and trembling limbs had escaped the attention of his heedless rider, not only wished, but meant to be with them, and, in order to give the promptest effect to his intentions, he was tearing down the slope at a speed which showed little consideration for his own safety or that of his mistress. Nellie did not like it at all. She might as well have tried to stop an avalanche as to pull up a runaway horse in such a place as that; but she tugged as hard as she could, just by way of letting him know that she was there, and, finding that her efforts produced no effect whatever, made the best of what could not be helped, sat well back, and wished for the end. Even in that moment of dire distress, she found a grain of comfort in the reflection that she was in no danger of heading the fox. Thundering down a declivity almost as steep as the proverbial side of a house, with the ground flying from under her like running water, an aspiration flashed across her mind akin to that in which the unfortunate bricklayer is said to have found time to indulge between the top of a Parisian scaffolding and the pavement of the street below—“*Oh, mon Dieu! pourvu que ça dure!*” “If nothing happens between this and that!” she thought. By “that” she meant the slope on the further side of the valley, where, supposing that she ever got there, she felt tolerably sure of being able to check her headlong career.

But, alas! Wasp had thought of that too; or, if he had not thought of it, instinct told him to head down the valley, and to round the base of the hill behind which the red coats had vanished. Somehow or other, he and his helpless load reached level ground; somehow or other—Nellie never knew how—they traversed a road, a ditch, and a small brook; and now they were racing across a stretch of open country, and were gaining upon the last of the horsemen. But, owing to some inequalities in the ground, only the heads and shoulders of these were visible, and in a minute or two the tops of their hats had disappeared. It was then that Nellie became aware of a new peril, and a more formidable one than any of those from which she had escaped. Directly before her was a ragged black hedgerow which looked both high and thick; and since nothing but a glimmer of grey sky could be discerned through it, it seemed evident that there must be a drop of unknown depth on the other side. Nellie took this in at a glance, and at the same moment a sickening suspicion of wire crossed her mind. Although this was her

first experience of following the hounds (for Mr. Brune had old-fashioned prejudices with reference to the appearance of ladies in the hunting-field) she had often ridden across country with her brothers, and was not afraid of any obstacle of moderate size; but she knew that she had never been over such a big thing as this in her life; and, what was worse, she very much doubted whether Wasp ever had either. The brute was rushing blindly ahead; she made a despairing and fruitless attempt to steady him; then she shut her eyes. Immediately came a crash; a sensation as if the whole world was breaking up into fragments, a brilliant display of fireworks—and the next thing of which Miss Brune was fully conscious was that she was sitting in a ploughed field, with her hair hanging over her face, and the hills and sky revolving in a most extraordinary manner round her.

After wondering for a moment whether she was dead or alive, and satisfying herself that her head was still upon her shoulders, she raised herself on to her knees; and perhaps some people would have profited by that position to return thanks for deliverance from sudden death. Nellie, however, must have inherited the instincts of a sportswoman; for the first thing that suggested itself to her mind was not this obvious duty, but the expediency of catching her horse, whom she saw at the other end of the field, trotting round with his head in the air, and in a state of bewilderment evidently quite equal to her own. Some people, again, would have been very willing to let that headstrong beast go his own way, and would not have cared to give him a second chance of breaking a Christian neck; but this was by no means Nellie's view of the case. She knew that Wasp would have had quite enough of running away for one day, and that, if by any means she could contrive to hoist herself upon his back, he would let himself be ridden home as submissively as could be wished.

To catch a loose horse is, however, one of those things which are more easily determined upon than carried into execution, and the difficulty is not lessened when the pursuer happens to be in a somewhat unsteady condition as to head and legs, and to be further encumbered with a torn riding-habit. Nellie plunged across the furrows as best she could, and when she got near her horse, called him by name; whereupon he cocked his ears, neighed, and waited for her to approach. He then flung up his head, and went off at a gallop. Nellie now proceeded to stalk him patiently and warily into a corner, he lending himself to the design and watching her movements with much apparent interest. When she was within a few yards of him, up went his head again, and away he cantered into another corner, whither she laboriously followed him. This manœuvre was repeated for the space of half an hour; at the end of which time Miss Brune's patience and strength alike gave way, and she felt very much disposed to sit down in the dirt and cry. Wasp, too, had seemingly become tired of the game. There was a gap in the hedge at the further end of the field which a less stupid animal would have taken advantage of long before. He now scrambled through it,

and was promptly lost to sight. The thunder of his retreating hoofs was heard for a few minutes; and then there was complete silence and solitude.

"What *am* I to do!" exclaimed Nellie, half laughing, half crying. Her hat was a shapeless ruin, her habit was in rags, her face was bleeding from the scratches of the briery hedge, she was covered with mud from head to foot, and she was a good five miles from home. As to what she was to do, that was a question which demanded no long consideration, there being only one thing to be done: she must make her way home on foot. But, although Miss Brune soon realised this necessity, she was not at all so sure that her strength was equal to the task that lay before her. She began to feel the effects of her fall in aching limbs and a swimming head, and the exercise which she had taken in the last half-hour had reduced her to something very like complete exhaustion. However, she stumbled out of the ploughed field, crossed a pasture, and ere long struck a faintly-marked track which she knew would lead her across the downs to Broom Leas.

The experienced novel-reader will perceive that the moment has now arrived for the introduction upon the scene of the *deus ex machina*; and sure enough before Nellie had plodded a quarter of a mile between the cart-ruts that marked her path, he duly made his appearance in the form of one whom she had supposed to be many miles away at that time. In her sorry plight, dignity and conventionality were burdens too petty to be remembered: accordingly, when the equestrian who was approaching her at a foot's pace pulled up, and exclaimed, in accents of stupefaction, "God bless my soul! is that Miss Brune?" she replied with unaffected warmth—

"Oh, Mr. Stanniforth, I am so delighted to see you! I began to think I should have to lie down and die in a ditch."

Mr. Stanniforth had at once dismounted, and was too busy inquiring into the nature of the accident that had befallen Miss Brune to give any explanation of his own presence. It was not until she had assured him at least a dozen times that she had received no hurt beyond a few scratches, and that all she at present desired was to find some means of reaching home before the spectacle of the riderless grey should have frightened her father out of his senses, that he consented to give an account of himself. He was staying at Longbourne, he said. He had come down quite suddenly, finding that he had a few days at his disposal; he had ridden out after luncheon, in hopes that he might fall in with the hounds, but had failed to do so, and was now very glad indeed that he had failed.

"I suppose Mrs. Winnington and Edith have come back," observed Nellie, who had now had time to bethink herself of many things which the first sight of a friendly face had driven out of her remembrance, and whose manner had consequently become much more formal.

"No, they haven't," answered Tom, glancing at her quickly; "they

are—somewhere or other. Margaret told me where it was, but I'm sure I forget. Why should you suppose they had returned?"

"Oh, I don't know; I thought perhaps they might," answered Miss Brune with ostentatious carelessness. "I wish I could get home somehow; my father will certainly think I am killed. Can't you suggest something?"

"Well—unless you were to ride my horse. But you could hardly do that."

"No, hardly. There is a farmhouse about a mile further on which I could easily find my way to; and if they only knew at home that I was there, they could send for me. Couldn't you ride on and tell them?"

"Yes, I could do that, of course," answered Mr. Stanniforth slowly, and with evident reluctance. "But I don't think you ought to be left alone here."

"Why not?" inquired Nellie, turning an astonished pair of eyes upon him. "What harm could possibly happen to me? I should be so very much obliged if you would go on as quickly as you can; it would be so much the best way."

"If you tell me to go I must go; but I feel sure that your father would much prefer my seeing you into a place of safety. You really are not fit to walk without help, and if you will allow me to give you my arm——"

Nellie said she was perfectly well able to walk by herself, and required both her hands to hold up her habit.

"And besides," continued Tom, "my getting to Broom Leas a quarter of an hour sooner or later can make very little difference. Either your horse has gone straight back to his stables, in which case he is there by this time, or he has gone off in the other direction—which from your account seems more likely—and will probably be heard of next in Crayminster. Do let me take you as far as that farm, and I promise you that the moment I have handed you over to the farmer's wife, I will be off to Broom Leas like the wind."

Nellie did not give her consent to this arrangement; but, as she did not withhold it either, Mr. Stanniforth let well alone, and said no more. They walked on, side by side, in silence for some little time, and then he took up the conversation at the point where it had been broken off.

"Did you mean to say just now," he asked abruptly, "that it must have been in order to see the Winningtons that I had come here?"

"Really, I had not thought much about the matter. It wouldn't be very extraordinary if you had come here in order to see them, would it? I thought you liked them so much."

"So I do," he answered resolutely; "I think they are very nice people—especially Miss Winnington. But it wasn't to see them that I came here, all the same."

"Oh!"

“If you care to know why it was that I came——”

“Thanks; I don’t care to know at all,” interrupted Nellie hastily; for in an instant she had guessed what was coming, and she was determined to stop it, if she could. “Where have you been since you left these parts?”

Had she known Mr. Stanniforth as well as some of his colleagues in the House of Commons knew him, she would have been aware that to stop that excellent man when once he had made up his mind to deliver himself of a statement was to the full as hopeless a task as to pull up Wasp in mid-career.

“All right,” he answered cheerfully; “then I’ll tell you, though you don’t care to hear. I should have to tell you sooner or later, and why not now as well as at any other time? I came here because I hoped to see you.”

It was then that the impossibility of assuming a cold and majestic mien with a broken hat cocked rakishly over one eye, and a countenance disfigured by many scratches, made itself painfully manifest to Miss Brune.

“Well,” she said, laughing nervously, “you have seen me now, and it is to be hoped that you are satisfied. I sincerely trust that no other stranger will see me for at least a week.”

“But you don’t call me a stranger, do you?” asked Tom reproachfully. And, getting no answer to this query, he continued, in a low and slightly hoarse voice, “Miss Brune, I am generally considered to be a tolerably ready speaker; but there are some things that a man feels too strongly about to be able to express in the best words; and I don’t know how to say what I am going to say to you, though Heaven knows I have thought about it often enough.” He paused for a moment. “There is a great deal that might be said about difference of age and—other things,” he resumed, “but perhaps you will understand, without my mentioning it, that I fully feel the force of all that, and that I am not making use of any conventional form of words when I say that I know myself to be not nearly good enough for you. Only this I can say for myself, that I never loved any woman but you in my life, and never shall. It is rather odd for a man of my age to be able to make such an assertion; but I don’t know, after all, why it should help me much. It all comes to much the same thing in the end. It’s just a case of Yes or No.”

Having put the case in this very explicit manner, Mr. Stanniforth stood still, and paused for a reply.

Now to be driven into a corner is what no woman likes; and Nellie considered that she had especial reason for resenting such treatment.

“If I had supposed for one moment that you were going to speak in this way,” she said tremulously, “I should not have allowed you to walk with me. I don’t think you ought to—to have taken advantage of——”

"But is it to be Yes or No?" persisted this somewhat peremptory wooer, too eager for his answer to notice the appeal made to his generosity. "Only tell me that, and I won't say another word."

"Oh, dear," exclaimed Nellie, bursting into a rather hysterical laugh, "how ridiculous this is! I wonder whether anybody in the world but you would ever have dreamt of choosing such a time as this to—to mention such a subject. I can't think of anything at all, except of how dreadfully tired I am. Is that the farm over there? Oh, I *hope* it is."

"But, Miss Brune—Nellie—won't you just tell me whether it is to be No?"

"Very well, then," cried Nellie, stamping her foot in exasperation, "it is No—of course it is No! I didn't want to be disagreeable, but you will have it. It is No; I can't say anything more."

It was true enough that she could not say anything more. The agitations of the day had completely broken down her self-control at last, and, despite all her efforts, the tears had forced their way into her eyes. It was all that she could do to avoid disgracing herself by bursting into audible weeping.

But Tom Stanniforth, who was looking straight before him, did not see these signs of distress. Not another word did he speak until they had reached the farmhouse and he had delivered his charge into the hands of the farmer's wife. But just before he mounted his horse, he held out his hand to Nellie, and said—

"Good-bye, Miss Brune. I shan't bother you by letting you see me again till you have forgotten all this. I am sorry if I caused you any annoyance just now; and I know you are kind-hearted enough to be a little sorry for me too. It was quite true, what I told you about my never caring for anybody else. I hope you'll believe that, and that you'll forgive me if I have seemed a little presumptuous. I had to say it, you know."

Nellie nodded, being unable to find her voice; and so he rode off, and was soon out of sight.

Late that evening Mr. Brune, who had scoured the country far and wide in search of his daughter, and had thus been spared the shock of encountering Wasp, who had trotted quietly back to the stables, remarked that Tom Stanniforth really seemed to have behaved with great sense and consideration.

"I shall always like Tom," he said; "a true gentleman in every way, whatever you may say about his pedigree. I can't understand what you find to dislike in him."

"I don't dislike him," answered Nellie humbly; "I think he is very kind."

"But you look down upon him, Lord knows why! One gets odd ideas into one's head; I suppose it's a sign of old age creeping on," continued Mr. Brune musingly; "but I couldn't help thinking to-day

what a capital thing it would have been if you and he had taken to each other, and if he had married you instead of Edith. Don't make faces, my dear, I am only indulging in speculations; and, dear me! what a speculation that would have been, when you come to think of it! I suppose Tom Stanniforth will be one of the richest men in England; and, upon my word, I believe he will be one of the best husbands too. I don't grudge Mrs. Winnington her luck; but it must be confessed that she does have luck."

Nellie made no answer, except to point out that it was long past bed-time.





"PARIGI, O CARA!"

THE
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No New Thing.

CHAPTER XVIII.

PHILIP GOES INTO SOCIETY.



THE moment when Mr. Brune was giving way to mercenary aspirations, as recorded above, the subject of his regrets was sitting before a blazing fire in the smoking-room at Longbourne, smoking one of the excellent cigars of which a stock was always to be found in that well-ordered establishment, and enjoying, or appearing to enjoy, the creature comforts incidental to the situation. It was his sister-in-law who had suggested to him that, as they were alone in the house, they should betake themselves to this cosy little apartment immediately after dinner, asserting, as kind-

hearted ladies do sometimes (and Heaven only knows whether they are speaking the truth, or whether it is not an act of selfish brutality to take them at their word), that she liked the smell of tobacco, and that to spend the evening in the smoking-room, instead of in the drawing-room, was an unwonted treat to her.

It reminded her, she said, of old days, when she used to sit with Jack after dinner. Perhaps she wanted an excuse for talking about

Jack ; and on ordinary occasions Tom, who had had a sincere affection for his younger brother, would have been willing enough to gratify her ; but this evening his thoughts were, not unnaturally, centred upon himself, and with a very little encouragement he would have related the whole history of his disappointed hopes. Thus, these two people, who had become excellent friends, and who were both inclined just now to claim a little of the sympathy to which friendship is entitled, remained for some time at cross purposes, each throwing out hints to which the other failed to respond, until it became evident that some topic of common interest must be resorted to. This was in Tom's favour ; for when the conversation languished, it was inevitable that the adventure of the day should suggest itself as the ground for a fresh start, and so he soon found an opportunity of remarking, in a casual manner, that he supposed so pretty a girl as Miss Brune would not be likely to remain Miss Brune much longer.

"I don't think she will be in a hurry to marry," Margaret said. "Nellie has a good deal of character, and she will be sure to think well before she chooses."

"If she has not chosen already."

"Yes, if she has not chosen already. There are perhaps half-a-dozen marriageable young men hereabouts, and I believe they are all of them devoted to her in an off-and-on sort of way."

"Is there anybody in particular, should you suppose?" inquired Mr. Stanniforth, staring up at the cornice.

Margaret poked the fire, and made no reply ; so he went on, "I used to fancy that young Marescalchi was paying her a good deal of attention, but perhaps it didn't mean anything."

Margaret laughed ; whereupon her interrogator withdrew his eyes from the ceiling with great promptitude, glanced inquiringly at her, saw it all, and immediately dropped into a gloomy reverie.

"I am glad you noticed that," said the unconscious Margaret, "for I have always thought that those two were exactly suited to one another, and hoped that something might come of it some day. But I have given up match-making," she added with a shake of her head. "I have made one or two attempts in that way, and the results have not been encouraging. I suppose people must be allowed to choose for themselves."

But Mr. Stanniforth was no longer anxious to pursue the subject, and indeed had not distinctly heard the last few words. "Oh, yes, certainly, I quite agree with you," he said ; and then began to talk very fast about habitual drunkards, in which unfortunate class of society he had been lately stirred up to take a keen interest. He had a comprehensive scheme for dealing with them in their double character of afflicted fellow-creatures and responsible members of the community ; but as the carrying out of this project would have involved the expenditure of some millions of the public money, besides interfering with the

liberty of the subject after a fashion conceivable only to enlightened Radical brains, the reader need not be wearied with its provisions. Margaret listened to them patiently, argued against them, was triumphantly silenced, and ultimately went to bed with a consolatory assurance that she had done what was expected of her.

At breakfast the next morning, Mr. Stanniforth, who had passed a bad night, looked up from a pile of opened letters that lay before him, and said that he was very sorry, but he was afraid he must be off. He had spent the first half of the recess in unwonted idleness, and would now have to work hard to make up time. The habitual drunkards, it appeared, were clamouring for attention; the anti-vivisectionists were about to hold meetings in various places at which the presence of the member for Blackport would be indispensable; the insufficiency of railway servants, and consequent alarming increase of accidents, was likewise a subject that seemed to require looking into; so that, upon the whole, it came to this, that he would have to leave by the twelve o'clock train.

Margaret expressed her surprise and regret at this sudden change of plans, but was hardly so much afflicted by it as she might have been, had not the post brought her her own share of disquieting correspondence in the shape of an announcement from Philip that he had finally made up his mind to abandon the law in favour of the operative stage.

"I have been thinking about this for a long time," he wrote, "but I would not tell you until I was tolerably sure of success, because I wanted to spare you needless worry, and I knew you would be rather horrified at first. Don't breathe a word about it to anybody just yet—it would only set the whole pack of them baying at you if you did—but think it over quietly, and I am sure you'll agree that I might do worse. Old Steinberger (perhaps you have never heard of him, but he is a celebrity nevertheless)—Steinberger says my high notes only want practice to be as good as Wachtel's (I daresay you have never heard of Wachtel either); and, if all goes well, I ought, in a few years' time, to jump to the top of the tree at one bound. Is there any other profession in the world in which such a *coup* as that would be at all possible? As for the social position, anybody will tell you that great singers are received everywhere in these days; and between ourselves, my dear old Meg, who am I to give myself airs? The nuisance of it is that living in London, and having the best masters, and all that, costs a lot of money; but I must economise, and I daresay I shall manage to get on somehow. The rapidity with which a five-pound note melts away here is awful. Cab-hire alone"—&c., &c.

The remainder of the letter contained a good many hints of this delicate nature, for Philip seldom asked directly for money, that being a course of procedure which went against his finer feelings.

Money, however, was what he was at this time in urgent need of; and, but for this circumstance, it is probable that Margaret would have been allowed to remain for some time longer in ignorance of his schemes.

One reason in particular he had for desiring that his coffers should be replenished: namely, that he contemplated a change of domicile. The remote situation of Coomassie Villa—half a day's journey from the Club, as he would often pathetically remark—was causing him daily inconvenience, and he no longer dreaded the risk attaching to residence in a more frequented quarter; for he was beginning to feel convinced of the truth of the common saying that one is never so much alone as in a crowd. It was, however, quite certain that the suburban butcher, baker, and grocer would not suffer him to depart until their several little accounts had been defrayed; and therefore it was that he awaited Margaret's answer with no small impatience, and that, when the answer came, he was a great deal more anxious to examine the figure of the cheque contained in the envelope than the accompanying eight pages of manuscript. But he did read the latter as soon as he had ascertained the satisfactory nature of the former, and was a good deal touched by Margaret's kindness and generosity.

Nothing, indeed, could have been more moderate than the tone of her reply. She did not deny that Philip's news had startled her, nor that she had certain misgivings as to the social position about which he had expressed himself so confidently; but she admitted that he was better able to judge of such questions than she could be, and further, that he had a perfect right to choose his calling in life for himself; the one essential thing, for him and everybody else, was to have a calling of some kind or other. She then went on to make some very true, if not very original, observations on the solaces of labour, which Philip skimmed over rapidly, and concluded by thanking him for having taken her into his confidence. In a postscript she added that she was sure his expenses must be heavier than he could conveniently manage, and that she therefore enclosed a trifle, which she hoped would help to lighten them for a time.

There was a pleasing provisional sort of sound about the last three words which Philip did not fail to note and appreciate.

"Fan," said he gravely, as he folded up the letter, "if the baby should die, and I should be cut off in my prime, immediately after realising a handsome fortune on the boards of the Italian Opera, don't you take it into your foolish little head to adopt an orphan. Unless he turned out to be very unlike some other orphans whom I have heard tell of, he would be a burden to you all your life, he would take your last penny from you with absolute complacency, and at the bottom of his heart he would think you rather a fool for giving it to him."

The awful possibilities foreshadowed in this speech were too much for Mrs. Marescalchi, who began to cry.

"Now, now, Fan," remonstrated Philip, "you ought to know me better by this time than to take every word I say so seriously. I'm not really such an ungrateful beggar as I make myself out; and as for dear old Meg, it's a positive delight to her to throw her money out of

window. If I didn't pick it up, you may be sure that somebody else would—perhaps a less deserving person.”

“Oh, but Philip,” sobbed Fanny, “how could you talk like that about—about your dying? And dear baby, too! I can't bear to hear you say such things.”

“Oh, is that it?” said Philip, much amused. “I think you may feel reassured, then. In point of physical health I can safely speak of myself in the highest terms, and I don't see a symptom of anything wrong with baby, unless its excess of fat. So dry your eyes, Fan, and I'll go out and search for lodgings in some more civilised district.”

Of this task Philip discharged himself with due circumspection. It might be permissible to be bold, but it would not do to be too bold; and therefore he decided to eschew such favourite localities as Clarges Street and the like, where people from Crayminster or the neighbourhood might at any time establish themselves next door to you for a week or two. The other side of Bond Street was quite as handy and less dangerous; and chancing upon a tolerably commodious first floor in Conduit Street, which at that season of the year was to be had for a moderate weekly rental, he agreed to take it. Thither, in the course of a few days, he transplanted his belongings, and there for a time he dwelt in prosperity and contentment, no man forbidding him.

When Philip walks down Conduit Street nowadays the smile with which he habitually faces the world and all that therein is fades from his expressive countenance, and as he passes a certain house, and glances up at its first-floor window, he does not fail to pay the tribute of a sigh to the memory of hours gone, never to return. He may have forgotten, as most of us do, when looking back upon the past, many a small rub, anxiety, or annoyance; but the fact still remains that his life during the first part of that winter season was one that agreed with his tastes to a nicety. The lodgings, though not actually luxurious, were as comfortable as London lodgings ever are; they were kept by a worthy couple whose hearts were at once conquered by the baby, who were kind to Fanny, and not as inquisitive as the servants at Coomassie Villa had been; and if the cooking left something to be desired, this was but a small drawback to Philip, since he was so frequently obliged to dine away from home.

It was not only to the Temple that he went when he thus absented himself, nor was the obligation in question by any means of a stringent nature; but, as Philip was careful to explain, it was not on that account the less real. It would never do for him to refuse invitations, he said, and to allow people to forget him. Social interest and social influences were of the greatest importance to a man who had to make his own way in the world, and counted for more in the profession that he had chosen than the uninitiated might suppose. He gave instances of artists who had obtained the most lucrative engagements by securing the good word of a certain melomaniac nobleman, and of others who had met

with all manner of slights and obstacles simply through having failed to please the same potent individual.

But, indeed, he need not have taken so much pains to excuse himself. Fanny was, in the first place, firmly convinced that her lord and master could do no wrong; and, in the second, she would have put up with any amount of personal inconvenience rather than have defrauded him of the least of his amusements. Any one who should have suggested to her that she was a neglected wife would have occasioned her quite as much surprise as anger. For her own part, she had never been able to accustom herself to late dinner, and greatly preferred a cup of tea and some hot buttered toast at six o'clock. When the baby had been tucked up for the night, and the nurse, after an hour or so of pleasant gossip over the cradle, had also gone to bed, Mrs. Marescalchi would get out some of the books by means of which she was perfecting her education, draw up her chair to the fire, and prepare for a solitary evening, without the faintest suspicion that she was a person whose lot any one would venture to pity.

Sometimes Philip did not come in until long after midnight; for there were evening parties as well as dinners at which he felt it his duty to be present; but, early or late, he always found his wife sitting up for him on his return—a little pale perhaps, but ever in the best of spirits, and not in the least sleepy, as she unhesitatingly declared, if he remonstrated with her on not having gone to bed. There was a cheerful fire, there were his slippers and his velvet smoking-coat, and his particular arm-chair all ready for him; on the table were the little cut-glass decanters which Fanny had purchased for him out of her own pocket-money, knowing that he liked pretty things, and the seltzer-water, and a plate of sandwiches, in case he should feel exhausted after all the labours of the evening.

When Philip had made himself quite comfortable, Fanny would seat herself upon a footstool beside him, with her little flaxen head resting against his knee, and coax him to tell her about all the lords and ladies; and then he would indemnify himself for many hours of enforced self-restraint by taking off the little peculiarities of those to whose coat-tails and apron-strings he was clinging in the hope of being upheld by them until he should be in a position to dispense with such aid. His keen sense of the ridiculous stood in need of some vent of this kind; and it was as much to amuse himself that he acted as to amuse Fanny, upon whom some of the finer touches of his mimicry were somewhat thrown away. Yet it is probable that her enjoyment of these midnight performances was greater even than his; and upon one occasion the old gentleman who lodged on the second floor came down in his dressing-gown to say that, if there was a joke, he should take it as a favour if he might be let into it, so that, since it appeared that he was to be deprived of sleep by the noise of laughter from below, he might at least have the satisfaction of being able to laugh too.

There was a time, not so very long ago, when London in the winter was a city of the dead, so far as people who wished to be considered fashionable were concerned; but all that is changed now. Society has greatly enlarged itself; people whose professions require them to spend the greater part of the year in the metropolis are allowed to call themselves fashionable in spite of that necessity; other people, who are in the proud position of requiring no profession, occupy their town-houses every now and again, and receive their friends there: there is less of a crowd and bustle than in the spring, but there is more sociability; and a young man who has talents of a certain kind and a sufficiently large acquaintance, need have no fear that his time will hang heavily upon his hands. Philip's talents were of the most popular order, being such as contributed directly to the amusement of his fellow-creatures, and it soon became understood that he was living in London, and that a note addressed to his Club would find him. Hitherto he had been chiefly known as a good-looking young man with a turn for amateur theatricals; he had now acquired a fresh claim to attention in the possession of a wonderful tenor voice; and this gift served him as a passport into many houses which would otherwise have remained closed to him. He accepted all invitations from great and small alike; and this would doubtless have been good policy upon his part, if he had been pursuing a policy at all; but the probability is that he was doing nothing of the sort. He was not really ambitious, nor was it in him to look far ahead. He went everywhere, because it amused him to do so, and because he had no particular leaning towards one class of society more than another. He did not inform his friends and patrons that he proposed eventually to appear upon the stage, judging that the time was not yet ripe for that announcement; but when some of them suggested to him that a voice like his ought to be public property, and that if he decided to make it so, he might almost command his own price for it, he thanked them for their hint, laughed, and said—Well, perhaps that might be worth taking into account. In the meantime he was good-naturedly willing to eat their dinners and amuse their other guests and sing for them as often as they asked him to do so.

Herr Steinberger, whose avocations took him to most of the musical parties and private concerts that were going, did not altogether approve of all this. One evening, after hearing Philip sing a *duo* from the *Traviata* with the famous Signora Tommasini before some three or four hundred people, he caught his pupil by the elbow, and having led, or rather pushed, him into a corner, began to scold him roundly.

“What do you mean by this?” said the irascible little man. “It is a preach of gontract! Did I not tell you I would not have you sing in public?”

“Don't be rude and disagreeable, Steinberger,” said Philip, who was now on terms of familiarity with his master and was not at all

afraid of him ; “ this isn’t singing in public. I am here by invitation, and so, I suppose, are you.”

“ I am nodding of the sort,” returned the other. “ I am paid ; and if I was not paid I would be smoking my pipe at home. Do you think I come out at night to hear you sing *Parigi, O cara?* ”

“ Well, well,” said Philip ; “ I am not paid, at all events, and the question of payment was what our agreement referred to, wasn’t it? I quite understand that you will expect to have a percentage off my earnings, when I make any.”

“ I do not want your money,” growled the German, reddening ; “ I want that you should be a *gredit* to me. And that you will never be, if you let yourself be flattered by the old Tommasini and spoilt by all these laties, and give up your work. You work no more as you did ; you are getting lazy and gonsented—you will go to the tefel ! ” And he turned on his heel and walked off, fuming.

But when Philip went to take his lesson as usual, the next morning, Steinberger recurred to the subject.

“ You think you learn to sing that way? You think, because they all clap last night, that you sing like the Tommasini? The Tommasini she is olt, she is past her day ; but if she would have let out her voice, she would have lift the roof off that meeserable little room ; while you !—one could not hear you on the stairs. How often must I tell you to open your mouth wide—so !—as if you would *schwallow* the audience? When will you learn to do like this ? ”

And Steinberger opened his own great jaws to their utmost capacity, struck a terrific din out of the piano with his fat fingers, and attacked the same air that his pupil had warbled so sweetly on the previous night—“ *Ba-harichi, o-ho ga-ra!* ”

Philip burst into a shout of laughter. “ No, no, Steinberger ; I shall never be able to sing like that.”

“ Ah, you may laugh,” said the other, whose voice in truth was more powerful than melodious ; “ but what is your English proverb?—‘ Let him laugh who wins.’ And we have a German proverb too, which says ‘ *Zeit ist Geld.* ’ And you will never win anything at all, my vrient, if you spend your time at evening barties.”

Philip did not allow his peace of mind to be disturbed by any such prognostications as these. He knew that Steinberger was fond of scolding, and would have found something else to grumble at in default of the present pretext. He himself thought he was getting on famously. And then it was such a jolly life ! Nobody bothered him ; nobody asked questions ; nobody wanted to know where he lived, or what he was doing when he was not at the Club or in society. Even Walter, whom he saw occasionally, had not inquired his address. Walter, fortunately, was busy from morning till night, and was quite content to dine with his friend at the Club on Sundays, and refresh himself with a talk about Oxford and cricket. Philip, after having for many years of his life looked up to

Walter with reverence and some little awe, now found their respective positions reversed, and was rather disposed to patronise his former protector, who was only a clerk in a bank, entirely "out of it" as regarded the gay world, and ridiculously ignorant of London and its ways. Brune would get up and say good-night with a grave face, when Lord Salford dropped in after dinner and proposed to Philip to adjourn to another Club, where they could play poker. No doubt he was thinking that Sunday evening might be better employed than in this manner, and that Philip could hardly have been worse employed, on any evening of the week, than in staking his slender purse against Lord Salford's inexhaustible one.

The latter young man used sometimes to allude to Fanny in a way which it could not have been very pleasant for her husband to listen to, and once he threw our poor hero into a cold perspiration by suddenly fixing his little red eyes upon him, and saying, "I believe you know more about her than anybody else, Marescalchi." But this was probably only a random shot; and as Philip kept his countenance, and declared that he had neither seen nor heard of the girl for more than a year, the subject dropped, and there seemed little fear of his secret being discovered.

The discovery of such secrets as his can, however, only be a question of time; and, considering how few precautions Philip had thought it necessary to take, it was rather strange that he should have been able to remain a matter of two months in Conduit Street without any of his friends suspecting him of being a married man. One old friend found him out at last in the simplest and most natural manner in the world.

Colonel Kenyon, after having been baked and enervated for ten years in the Madras Presidency, had been sent by a considerate country to recruit himself on the heights of Shorncliffe, where the wind is always in the east, except when it blows a strong gale from the south-west, and where the general aspect of things during the winter time is about as cheerful as that of a Central Asian steppe. Pinched and shivering in this high-lying region, and brooding daily over the puzzle of existence and the hardships of a soldier's life, the poor man would have been almost inclined to gratify several promising brother-officers by resigning his commission, had not a letter from Longbourne come, from time to time, to cheer him up. These communications were at first somewhat stiff and formal; but as the replies which they elicited were quite as constrained in character, and a great deal more awkward, it was but natural that Margaret should try to make some advance towards the renewal of a friendship so unhappily disturbed, and to show that she, on her side, was ready to forgive and forget. Thus by degrees the tone of this long-sustained correspondence slipped back into its accustomed groove, and before the year was out, Hugh could look forward to receiving his weekly budget of news just as of old.

It was in the month of January that Margaret for the first time informed him of Philip's change of plans. She had not mentioned it before, she said, because she had not felt quite at liberty to do so; "and I should not mention it now," she added, "only that I know I am perfectly safe in telling you anything; and I should so very much like to hear what you think of it all. Do you ever go up to London for a day or two? If you do, I wish you would try to see Philip one day at the — Club, and let me know how he is looking, and whether he seems in good spirits about himself. I don't like to bother him with questions; but I have felt uneasy about him lately. He writes very seldom, and he never came to see me at Christmas, though it had been arranged that he was to come down for a week. I give you full leave to laugh at me; but I can't help having a feeling that something is wrong,"—&c. &c.

Colonel Kenyon did not laugh. He thought it exceedingly likely that something might be wrong, and for his own part was not particularly anxious to find out what that something might be. It is not pleasant to pry into the private affairs of one's neighbours, nor is it pleasant to be the bearer of bad news. He did not, however, suffer these considerations to weigh with him, but, like the docile slave that he was, took a return-ticket to London, and presented himself at Philip's Club that same afternoon. Mr. Marescalchi was not there, and the Colonel, having only a few hours to spare, asked for his address. This was readily given to him by the porter, who had not been told to observe any secrecy in the matter; and so it came to pass that Colonel Kenyon reached Conduit Street just in time to see Philip step out of a hired brougham, followed by a young lady, who carried a baby in her arms. The young lady Hugh at once recognised as the same whom he had encountered in Philip's company on a former occasion, and the presence of the baby was a fact the significance of which there was no misinterpreting. The whole truth flashed instantly into the intelligence of the astounded spectator.

"Oh, you unspeakable young ass!" he muttered; "you have done for yourself now, and no mistake. Mercy upon us! how am I to tell Margaret of this? I won't tell her—I'll be hanged if I will! Let the young beggar do it himself. The question is, shall I go and have it out with him, or shall I wash my hands of the whole business?"

While Hugh was standing doubting on the pavement, Philip and Fanny had entered the house. Neither of them had noticed, in the gloom of the winter afternoon, the tall figure that had remained motionless within a few yards of them as they hurried in out of the cold. The Colonel took two turns up and down the street, and considered of it. Finally he decided that he would not attempt to see Philip that day. It would hardly be fair, and it would certainly be most embarrassing, to walk straight into the presence of Mrs. Philip; moreover, a

man must have a little time to prepare himself for interviews of this disagreeable kind. No; he would come up to town another day, and try the Club again; and in the meantime surely he was not bound to tell Margaret what he had accidentally seen.

Now it so happened that a series of trivial accidents prevented Colonel Kenyon from carrying out his intention as speedily as he could have wished. To begin with, he was short of officers, having good-naturedly allowed too many of them to go away on leave. Then the General commanding the district took it into his head unexpectedly to hold a field-day. Then came three courts-martial within a few days of each other; and then occurred the vexatious case of Driver Jennings.

Driver Jennings, a mild-mannered man, having obtained permission to remain at Folkestone till midnight in order to soothe the last moments of an aged relative, returned to camp, very drunk, at an advanced hour, and was seized with a notion that it might contribute to the general hilarity if he were to "set the 'ole blooming place afire." He accordingly collected many furze-faggots, piled them up as neatly as could have been expected from one in his condition, applied matches and paper to the bottom of the structure, and then proceeded to lie down upon the top of it himself, like an Indian widow. Here he would doubtless have perished miserably, had he not been dragged off by the heels, in a somewhat charred condition, by Colonel Kenyon himself, close to whose door this *auto-da-fé* had been kindled. A very pretty blaze was by this time lighting up the surrounding district; and although no great damage was done, the whole camp had turned out to extinguish the flames, and Driver Jennings was led away, weeping bitterly, to be locked up. The whole affair gave the good Colonel much annoyance; for the man had been his own servant, and between Jennings drunk and Jennings sober there was all the difference in the world. Moreover, Mrs. Jennings washed for him, and there were numerous little Jenningses. He therefore felt bound to remain upon the spot, and see what could be done in a quiet way towards mitigating the punishment due to so heinous an offence; and so, what with one thing and another, a fortnight slipped away before Colonel Kenyon again inquired for Philip at his Club. Once more he was disappointed of finding the object of his search; and this time the porter added that he had not seen Mr. Marescalchi for three or four days, and believed he must be out of town.

Hugh sighed, and walked straight off to Conduit Street, inwardly hoping that the porter's conjecture might prove correct. Should it be so, he would have done all that could be required of him, and might write to Margaret explaining that he had failed to discover anything about the young man, good, bad, or indifferent.

However, the fat landlady who opened the door for him said Yes; Mr. Marescalchi was at home.

"And—er—Mrs. Marescalchi?" asked the Colonel hesitatingly.

"Yes, sir; they're both in. But I don't know as they'd care for to see any one."

The woman's eyes were red, and her tone was so lugubrious that Hugh naturally asked whether anything was the matter.

"Oh, dear me, yes, sir; they've had a sad misfortun' pore things. The dear little baby was took with convulsions day before yesterday, sir, and died in a few hours. Such a fine healthy child too!—but you never can tell how 'twill go with their first teeth; and 'tis the will of Heaven, which we must all submit to."

"God bless my soul! I am very sorry to hear this," said the tender-hearted Hugh, much concerned. "It must be a terrible blow to—to the poor mother."

He had had time to reflect, rather unjustly, that the calamity was not one which would be likely to afflict Philip very much.

"Ah, you may say that, sir. And to Mr. Marescalchi too, pore gentleman!—he do take on terrible about it. Should I just mention as you was here, sir? It might cheer him up like to see a friend."

"No thank you—no," answered Hugh hurriedly. "Under the circumstances, it would be better not. No, I won't leave a card; I—it's of no consequence. Call again, you know." And he retreated hastily, leaving the landlady with a strong suspicion in her mind that the milingarty-looking gentleman was a dun in disguise.

It being now beyond a doubt that Philip Marescalchi was married, was it Colonel Kenyon's duty to write and inform Margaret of the fact? Readers may judge for themselves upon the point, which is one that seems to admit of a diversity of opinion. Hugh considered it carefully during a whole night and day, and then arrived at the conclusion that he might hold his peace. Rightly or wrongly, he had a very strong feeling that there was something underhand in surprising another man's secrets; and he could not help hoping that, with a little judicious pressure, Philip might be induced to tell his own tale—which would be so much the better solution of the difficulty.

It was with this end in view that he penned a laboriously ambiguous missive, in which he told Margaret that he had not managed to see Philip, but that, from certain rumours which had come to his ears, he was inclined to think that there was ground for her misgivings, and that something had gone wrong. But she must not alarm herself, he added, nor imagine that things were worse than they were. It was quite possible that he might have formed a mistaken notion; and, in short, the best thing she could do was to write to the young man himself, and urge him to make a clean breast of it.

The perversity of women is at the root of nine-tenths of the worries which make this world such an uncomfortable place to live in. When Margaret read Hugh's well-meant letter, she said to herself that people had no business to make accusations, unless they were prepared to substantiate them; that she was not going to force herself upon Philip's

confidence; that Hugh was a great deal too ready to suspect evil, and that she was sorry she had ever written to him about the matter. And for some time after this there was a marked coolness in the letters that were addressed to our patient Colonel at Shorncliffe.

CHAPTER XIX.

SIGNORA TOMMASINI.

THE old gentleman who lodged on the second floor in Conduit Street might go to bed as early as he pleased now, without any fear of his rest being disturbed by noise of laughter from below. Those merry evenings were gone and done with: they were as dead as the poor little dead baby who lay six feet deep in Kensal Green—as dead as the last century—as dead as yesterday. Life is nothing else than perpetual death and birth, gain and loss; “that which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been.” Mirth and sorrow come and go, and are forgotten; and perhaps, if we would admit it, grief is the shortest-lived of all our passions.

But that is what no one can bear to acknowledge; and Philip and his wife were firmly persuaded that they would never be merry together any more in the old fashion, never any more be tickled by the old jokes (which, to be sure, had not been intrinsically excellent), never recover the happiness, the thoughtlessness, the childishness which had been so suddenly swept out of their lives. And it so chanced that they were right; though the causes of the present and future change were not what they supposed or could foresee. If the second-floor lodger had listened attentively in the silence of the night, his ear might have caught a faint echo of other and sadder sounds, arising from his neighbours' drawing-room, than those to which he had become accustomed. The landlady, who was not exempt from the failings of landladies in general, and saw no great sin in standing rather close to a shut door, told her husband that she could hear “them pore Marescalchis crying and sobbing, night after night, as if their pore hearts 'd break,” and added that it broke her own heart to listen to them. Her heart, however, continued to perform its functions much as usual; as did that of one, at least, of the mourners, who stopped crying at the end of ten days or so. A man can't go on weeping for ever; and perhaps there are not a great many men in the world who would weep over a dead baby even for so long a time as ten days. Philip's temperament being what it was, sorrow was an emotion in which he could indulge just so long as there was something pleasurable in it, and no longer. When it grew painful, weary, monotonous, he began to seek for relief from it just as naturally as he would have looked about him for sticking-plaister if he had cut his finger. He picked up the thread of his daily life again where he had let

it fall; and surely no reasonable person can blame him for doing what all reasonable persons urge their friends to do under such circumstances.

But poor Fanny was by no means reasonable at this time. Had she been in her ordinary condition of mind and body, she would have been the first to acknowledge that her husband's loss was not, and could not be, as great as hers; but she was out of health, her spirits were broken and her nerves shattered; and so it came to pass that community of misfortune, which often reunites estranged couples, had the melancholy effect of creating a breach between this husband and wife, who had hitherto been the best of friends. The original fault, it must be acknowledged, lay with Fanny. She made it a great grievance that Philip declined to wear mourning; although he pointed out to her how hazardous it would be for him to appear in black without any ostensible reason for so doing. He ought not to have minded running that risk, she thought. She, who would have taken it as a matter of course if her husband had considered it prudent to pass her without recognition in the street; she who had already, by reason of her ambiguous position, been forced to bear a hundred petty indignities which she never spoke of, could not forgive this imaginary slight to the memory of her dead child. In the same way, she did not complain, either in word or in thought, of being left alone all day; but it did seem to her a terrible and unnatural thing that her husband should be able to go to the Club, to resume his singing lessons, and to show himself at dinners and concerts just as usual. Philip, in short, ceased to be infallible in her eyes; and that was a pity for both their sakes.

If there was one thing that Mr. Marescalchi hated more than another, it was settled gloom. A violent outburst of grief he could understand and participate in; but a phase of affliction which expressed itself in gazing blankly for a whole afternoon at a baby's frock or a pair of tiny shoes was altogether beyond the range of his sympathies. It was by virtue of her constant cheerfulness that Fanny had maintained her hold upon him so long as she had done. Now that she was no longer cheerful, no longer cared to hear about the outer world, no longer laughed with him, and often forgot to flatter him, she became simply a dull and rather vulgar little woman, whose good looks were fading away daily, and who had absolutely no intellectual charms to supply their place. He did not actually say this to himself; but he felt it; and he felt, too, as he had never done before, what a terrible mistake he had made in marrying beneath him. He shuddered when he thought of the future which he had laid up for himself; for, careless as he was, he did sometimes think of this now. He could not help wondering how it would have been if he had done as he believed he might have done, and engaged himself to Nellie Brune. Margaret had been writing to him a good deal about her lately, mentioning with transparent artfulness that the girl seemed depressed and unlike herself. The inference was obvious

and it was not displeasing to Philip. Depressed?—well, no doubt she might be a little depressed; but it would be in a modified and interesting fashion, he thought. Nellie was not the girl to mope, like some others whom he knew of. Wasn't it essentially plebeian to mope? Well-bred people control their emotions, keep their troubles under lock and key, and do not obtrude them upon the world, which naturally cares not a straw whether they have troubles or not; and Nellie was unquestionably well-bred. He had certainly been very much in love with her at one time; perhaps he had never really been in love with any one else. Now that he came to think of it, he was almost sure that he never had been. Supposing—there was no harm in supposing impossibilities—that he had been engaged to her now, how different everything would have been! What an interest she would have taken in his prospects! how she would have stirred him up to work! No one knew so well as Nellie did the way to apply that gentle goad of which his languid energies stood in need. And then, when the victory was won, and money was pouring in by the sackful on the gifted *primo tenore*, what a wife she would have made!—a wife of whom any man might be proud. “Whoever Nellie's future husband may be, he'll be a deuced lucky chap, and I congratulate him in advance,” says Philip to himself with much magnanimity.

He used to turn these things over in his mind as he sat by the domestic hearth, with Fanny staring at the baby's shoes opposite to him. When he was away from home he had other things to think about, and probably forgot that there were such persons as Mrs. Marescalchi and Miss Brune in existence. This outer life of his continued to be a gay one; though it also had its own troubles. The result of high play with Lord Salford and other young men of his calibre was what it generally is when earthen vessels essay to whirl down stream in company with brazen ones. Philip was not particularly unlucky; but when he won he spent his winnings, and when he lost there was apt to be a little difficulty about paying. He was not, of course, called upon to hand over the amount due in any hurry; but Lord Salford, who always paid punctually himself, was not so pleasant as he might have been to those who remained in his debt, and was given to reminding them of how matters stood in a business-like way which Philip, for one, did not relish. Salford had a habit of pulling out a note-book, every evening, as he sat down to the card-table, and beginning with: “Now let's see; you haven't paid me for three weeks. I make out that I'm so and so to the good. Just look and see if that's right, will you?”

“Oh, it's all right, old fellow; deal away,” Philip would answer hastily; but Lord Salford would not be put off like that.

“Ah, but you look and see if you make it the same as I do,” he would persist. “I like to start square; because sometimes—don't you know?—fellows will tell you they don't remember things—don't you know?”

Philip used to long to kick Lord Salford when he made insinuations of this kind ; but he couldn't afford to kick his friend, as perhaps that amiable nobleman was aware ; so he had to grin and bear it. Considering how high the stakes were, he pulled through better than might have been expected. Fortune favoured him sometimes ; and Margaret sent him another cheque—that being the most practical answer that she could discover to Colonel Kenyon's warning letter—which tided him over a bad week. And then, from time to time, he was favoured with a loan by a friend of whom a few words must now be said.

Signora Tommasini had been for so many years known to the public under that designation that her friends had long ago given up addressing her as Mrs. Thompson. It must be presumed that there had been a Mr. Thompson once upon a time ; but no one had ever seen him or recollected to have heard his widow mention his name ; nor perhaps was it generally remembered that she was an Englishwoman by birth ; for in her wanderings about the world she had picked up many foreign customs and languages, and was indeed accustomed to say of herself that she was a cosmopolitan. Her great triumphs lay in the past ; though she had not yet ceased to gather laurels, nor (which may have been a more important matter in her eyes) to receive handsome salaries. She had once had the finest contralto voice, and had been one of the handsomest women, in Europe ; and, though so much as this could no longer be said for her, there were people who still maintained that she was unapproachable in the *Huguenots*, while as for her face, there were no more wrinkles discernible upon it, when seen from beyond the footlights, than there had been twenty years before. The portliness of her person rendered her, it is true, a somewhat incredible *Africaine* to the artistic eye, but on the other hand she made a very imposing *Azucena*. In private life she was a most good-natured, lively, and agreeable person, fond of amusement, fond of society, given to a profuse style of living and careless of her money, after the traditional fashion of great singers. Many a struggling colleague had had reason to be grateful for her generosity, and no one had ever accused her of jealousy of her younger rivals, towards whom she was accustomed to bear herself with a great deal of kindly sympathy. It would hardly, however, have been in human nature that she should take quite so hearty an interest in the rising young women as in the rising young men, and it was as a member of the latter class that she had first noticed Philip and sought his acquaintance. The acquaintance, once made, ripened quickly into a warm friendship ; insomuch that Philip, who loved feminine admiration more than anything in the world, had been encouraged to let Signora Tommasini into the great secret that he was studying for the stage. After this he had proceeded, as time went on, to tell her of other things—of everything, indeed, that there was to tell about himself, barring the trifling circumstance of his marriage—and had found her an exceedingly cheery and comforting confidante.

"She is in love with you, that fat woman," Herr Steinberger would growl scornfully. "One of these fine days she will marry you; and then you will work no more. No! you will live upon her money for a few years, and then her voice will go, and then you will both of you *starf* in a garret. Or perhaps she will grind an organ in the streets, and you will dance, instead of the monkey—ho! ho!"

There was a Teutonic heaviness about Steinberger's pleasantries which might have irritated some people; but Philip took them very good-humouredly. He rather prided himself upon being able to stand chaff; and, for that matter, Herr Steinberger was not the only one who rallied him upon the stout Signora's evident partiality, and predicted that she would either lead him to the altar or bring an action for breach of promise against him before all was over. He himself partly believed that she had a weakness for his handsome person, and used sometimes to laugh with Fanny over the extravagant compliments which she was in the habit of paying him, and which he rather unkindly repeated. After the baby's death, when things were so sad and dreary at home, he had solaced himself with a good deal of the Signora's society, and had even been led, as we have seen, to give her so true a token of friendship as to dip into her purse upon occasion.

Signora Tommasini was at this time fulfilling an engagement at Her Majesty's Theatre, where a winter opera-season was going on, and was living in a gorgeous suite of apartments on the first floor of a fashionable hotel. In these Philip spent much of his spare time, being sometimes alone with their occupant, who had graciously given him to understand that he was at liberty to knock at her door at any hour of the day, and sometimes one among a crowd of free-and-easy visitors. Philip availed himself liberally of the permission accorded to him; for the Bohemian company which he encountered in this way diverted him immensely, and he had a sincere liking for his open-handed and impulsive hostess. In his heart he thought her rather an old fool; but then he thought that of so many people whom he liked.

One evening towards the end of January Philip, having, for a wonder, no engagement, went to the Opera to see Signora Tommasini in the *Favorita*. He made his entrance between the first and second acts, and recognised many acquaintances in different parts of the house, though none happened to be seated within speaking distance of his stall. This he was not sorry for; for he was in a melancholy vein and did not feel disposed for social intercourse. He sat down, and began wondering what would become of him if a run of ill-luck which had pursued him for more than a week should continue much longer. He already owed a large sum to Lord Salford—a sum so large that it made him sick to think of it, and that he was almost inclined to resolve upon abandoning play altogether, when once he should have pulled back his losses. Unfortunately, this process of "pulling back" was sure to be a slow and precarious one, and it might at any time be checked if Lord Salford

should suddenly discover—as he was by no means unlikely to do—that he had had enough of London, and was going in for hunting by way of a change. That, Philip was very much afraid, would mean settling, or at all events a confession of inability to settle. Contemplated from any point of view, the outlook was not a cheerful one, and he was growing very mournful over it when the sound of his own name, pronounced close to his ear, recalled him to the present.

“Marescalchi—Philip Marescalchi, the man who acts, don’t you know? They say he’s going to marry the old girl.”

“Marry the Tommasini! Well, there’s no accounting for tastes.”

“My good fellow, it ain’t a question of taste. It’s neck or nothing with him.”

“Oh, I see—wants the coin, eh? Who is Marescalchi, by the way? Know him at all?”

Philip glanced over his shoulder, and saw in the row of stalls behind him two specimens of the modern type of juvenile precocity whose smooth, vacuous moon-faces, surmounting very stiff collars, were entirely unknown to him. He was rather amused, therefore, when the first speaker answered calmly:—

“Know him? oh, yes, I know him. He’s the sort of man who goes everywhere now. His father was—let me see; what was his father? Something in the City, I think. Left him thirty thousand pounds, which he made precious short work of. Hasn’t a penny now.”

“What’s he living on, then?”

“Oh, if you come to that, what are half the fellows one knows living on? He does a little bit of Mister Jew, I expect; but that sort of game can’t be carried on long when you’re nobody’s heir, you know. Owes a good lot too, I believe, here and there. Salford has cleaned him out of something like ten thousand, and can’t get him to pay up. I suppose Marescalchi thinks it’s about time for him to marry his grandmother—no fool either!”

“Well, I can’t understand a fellow selling himself like that,” says the second youth, who was perhaps a little less sophisticated than his companion.

“Oh, it don’t do to be too particular. Tommy isn’t half a bad sort, and she was a deuced good-looking woman in her time,” replies the other man of the world, who could hardly have been out of the nursery at the epoch alluded to. “Got any amount of the needful too. Careful old soul, old Tommy; been saving up these twenty years,” he continues. “Gad! I’d marry her myself if she’d ask me.”

The rising of the curtain put an end to this dialogue, the greater part of which had caused Philip more amusement than annoyance. He had no objection to the innocent gossip of these young gentlemen; only that allusion to his losses at play had not been agreeable to him. “What a cad Salford is!” he thought angrily. “If only I can get it back to even

money, I'll never sit down to a card-table with him again as long as I live."

But it was principally in order to banish Lord Salford and cards from his recollection that Philip had betaken himself to the theatre; and feats of that kind were generally well within his capacity. This evening he achieved his object with the greater ease because he had a genuine appreciation of musical talent, and because Signora Tommasini happened to be singing her very best. Her rendering of *O mio Fernando* was worthy of her most palmy days, and by no one in the audience was she applauded more rapturously than by her young friend in the stalls, upon whom she had already contrived to bestow a gracious smile of recognition. The English public, which likes artists of well-established renown, and is kinder to favourites who have grown old in its service than any other public in the world, never failed to accord a warm welcome to Signora Tommasini; and she was greeted with prolonged clapping from all parts of the house when she came before the curtain, at the end of the act, to bow her acknowledgments.

A lady to whose box Philip paid a passing visit handed him her bouquet, and begged him to throw it to "that dear Tommasini;" adding, with a meaning smile, "She will value it the more coming from your hand."

"What, you too!" cried Philip. "I have just overheard an individual who says he knows me intimately—though I never to my knowledge set eyes on him before—telling his brother-booby that I am about to espouse my dear old fat friend; and now you are going to put me to open ridicule by making me cast these flowers at her feet in the presence of a whole theatre-full of people."

"I won't ask you to go through such an ordeal as that," said the lady, laughing. "Give me them back."

"Oh, I don't mind," answered Philip; "I'm not shy." And accordingly he did throw the bouquet at the end of the final duet.

It was quite true that he was not shy; yet he might perhaps have stayed his hand if he had anticipated the little scene that was to follow. He had intended that his bouquet should be launched just before the fall of the curtain; but in this he had calculated without the audience, which loudly demanded an encore; and when the Signora advanced, all smiles, to gratify this legitimate wish, what must she needs do but select Philip's flowers from among a host of others, and press them against that part of her ample bodice beneath which her heart might be supposed to be fluttering, while she threw a killing glance at the donor. The poor lady probably meant no harm by this gesture, which she must have indulged in many hundreds of times before; but under all the circumstances it was a trifle embarrassing. Philip was aware that during the succeeding few minutes he was being gazed at by a great number of inquisitive eyes, and he was not sorry when it was all over. He had,

however, the gratification of turning round and facing the well-informed youth behind him, who had by this time evidently discovered the identity of his neighbour, and who looked exceedingly hot and uncomfortable.

Philip sauntered out, whistling *O mio Fernando* softly, and presently went behind the scenes to congratulate Signora Tommasini on her triumph. After a time she came out of her dressing-room, and gave a cry of satisfaction on recognising him.

"Ah! this is lucky," she exclaimed; "you are just the person whom I wanted to meet. Let me drive you home, and we can talk as we go. I saw Lord —— to-day, and he was asking about you, and said he wished to make your acquaintance. You know he is a man who can do a great deal for people whom he fancies. He seemed to have an idea that you thought of the stage; I didn't tell him; but he said he had heard a rumour of it. He asked why you did not go to Italy. Why don't you go to Italy? I shall be singing at Naples and Florence in the spring; and if you were there at the same time, I could introduce you to all the musical people, and to your native country into the bargain. You ought to see Florence in May; there is no city like it in the world. Were you pleased with me to-night? I suppose you were, or you would not have thrown me those beautiful flowers. I have brought them away with me, you see."

Signora Tommasini's idea of conversation was of rather a one-sided kind. Her ideas moved even more quickly than her tongue, and she was for ever pouring out a stream of queries, without ever expecting any answer, or listening to it if she obtained one. However, just as she was stepping into her brougham, she put one question which demanded a prompt and definite reply.

"By-the-bye," said she suddenly, "where do you live? You have never mentioned your address to me."

"And don't mean to mention it now," thought Philip. He said aloud, "Oh, I'm not going home yet. You might set me down at the Club, if it wouldn't be taking you too much out of your way."

"How mysterious you are!" cried the Signora reproachfully, as they drove off; "you never tell me anything."

"Never tell you anything! Haven't I laid bare the innermost secrets of my soul to you? Haven't I confessed to you what I have never breathed a word of to any one else—about my losses at cards, I mean?"

"Ah, those cards!" sighed the Signora, falling into the trap, and forgetting all about her immediate subject of complaint; "how I wish I could induce you to give them up! You are going to your Club to play now, I suppose."

"Only for half-an-hour or so before I go to bed. According to all the rules of chance, my luck ought to be on the turn now, and I can't afford to lose time."

"I wish you would amuse yourself in some other way; I wish you

would not play with Lord Salford. He is not a nice young man, that. I hear more than you might suppose, and I hear that he says unpleasant things about you."

"I know he does, confound him!" cried Philip; "but what can I do? It's a case of pay or play; and as I can't pay, why——"

"You think you must keep on playing—I know! And when you have won you money back, if you ever do, he will want his revenge; and so it will go on until one of you is ruined. And it is not very difficult to guess which one that is likely to be. I am an impertinent old woman, am I not?"

"You are not in the least impertinent, and you are certainly not old," said Philip.

"Don't talk nonsense," returned the Signora, not ill-pleased. "Anybody can see that I am old and fat; but I am glad you don't think me impertinent. I want to be your friend——"

"You have shown yourself to be so," put in Philip.

"And friends must be allowed to claim some privileges. Now, will you make me a promise?"

"A hundred if you like."

"One will be enough for the present; only you must not break it. Will you promise that, if you should find yourself in sudden need of a sum of ready money, you will come to me? I am one of those people who always have lots of ready money—more than they know what to do with."

"My dear Signora Tommasini——"

"My dear Mr. Marescalchi, if we are to be friends, one of us may very well accept a loan of a few hundred pounds from the other. You will owe the money to me, instead of to Lord Salford, that is all. You will pay me as soon as you would have paid him; and in the meantime I shall not go about London telling everybody that you are in my debt. Here is your Club. Good-night; and don't forget our bargain."

And the Signora, who had a powerful arm, pushed Philip out on to the pavement, and slammed the door of the brougham before he could utter a word of answer or protest.

He mounted the steps, half touched, half amused, saying to himself that women were strange creatures, and entered the Club, where he found Salford and some others, as he had expected to do. They sat down to play at once; and if Philip, with whom things went extraordinarily well, had gone home at the end of the first hour, he would have wiped off nearly the half of his debt. But he was unwilling to desert his luck, and stayed on for another hour, thereby losing all that he had gained. This would not do at all; so he remained yet another hour, and finally rose up the winner of a small sum.

"I hope, after this, you won't go on howling about your bad luck, Marescalchi," growled Lord Salford, as they parted at the corner of St. James's Street. "Never saw a fellow hold such cards in my life!"

“Good-night,” answered Philip curtly, too sick at heart and disgusted with the whole business to resent the very unfounded accusation brought against him.

He hurried home, and, letting himself in with his latch-key, stole upstairs, oppressed by that guilty sensation which even the least hen-pecked of husbands must experience in coming in between three and four o'clock in the morning. A thread of light proceeding from beneath the drawing-room door did not serve to diminish this feeling of compunction. He turned the handle softly, and peeped in. Fanny was lying in her arm-chair beside the empty fireplace, fast asleep. Her head had fallen back a little, and Philip could not help noticing how sharp the outline of her chin, which had once been so prettily rounded, had become. There were lines, too, about the corners of her mouth, and she moved uneasily in her sleep, uttering, every now and then, a low moan which went straight to the listener's heart. He drew nearer, and stood looking down upon her. One of her hands was hanging down by her side; the book which it had held had fallen from it on to the floor. It was not Lindley Murray nor the *History of England*, as of yore; it was a child's picture-book, which Philip remembered to have bought, some weeks before, in the Burlington Arcade. He picked it up, and put it on the table beside a small heap of broken toys, a photograph, and a curl of fluffy golden hair that were lying there; then he laid his hand gently on the sleeper's shoulder.

She woke with a violent start and, knitting her brows, looked about her for a moment in a scared, puzzled way. “Oh, Philip, is that you?” she said at last. “You were so long in coming, and I fell asleep; and now the fire has gone out, and you will be cold. I am so sorry!”

Then she caught sight of the little collection of treasures on the table, and swept them hastily into her work-basket. It was an unlucky movement. Philip, who, a minute before, would have been ready to drop on his knees before this poor little neglected wife of his and implore her forgiveness, understood the meaning of it—the withdrawal of confidence and tacit reproach that it implied—and was offended.

“I am not cold,” he answered; “but you are, and no wonder! You really must give up this ridiculous habit of sitting up till I come in. It is not often that I am so late as this; but it would be impossible for me to promise to be at home at any given hour; and I can't have you making yourself ill by doing without your proper amount of sleep. Don't do it again, there's a good girl.”

“Very well, Philip,” answered Fanny meekly.

“And look here, Fan,” continued Philip, feeling that he was behaving rather badly, and therefore the more out of humour, “I do think you might try to stop grieving over what can't be helped. If you mourn from now to the last day of your life, you won't bring the poor little man back: and what good does it do you to make others uncomfortable and wretched?”

Fanny shook her head, and made no answer. The tears were running down her cheeks ; but she had turned her back to Philip, and was staring at the black cinders in the grate ; so he did not see this, and thought her obstinate.

“ Oh, I'm awfully hard-hearted, of course,” he cried impatiently. “ I ought not to leave you alone all night and all day ; but I can't help it. My good girl, don't you see that you simply drive me away ? I should go mad if I were to sit here by the hour together without daring to open my lips.”

Fanny burst suddenly into loud weeping. “ Oh, I wish I was dead too !” she exclaimed. “ I wish I was !—I wish I was ! You don't care for me any more—I have known it for a long time, and I don't blame you—what is there to care for in me ? Only I wish I could go to baby. I feel as if he *must* want me ; and nobody wants me here. Perhaps, if I prayed very hard to die, God would let me go.”

“ Hush, hush, my dear !” said Philip, passing his arm round her waist and drawing her head down on to his shoulder ; “ you mustn't talk like that, and you must never say again that I don't care for you ; because it isn't true. I spoke crossly to you just now, and I am sorry I did ; but you don't know how many things I have to worry me. Come, now, don't cry any more, Fan, and let us kiss and be friends.”

Fanny allowed herself to be soothed and comforted, like the child that she was ; and Philip went on.

“ You are upset and off your balance altogether, you poor little soul. You ought to get away, and have a complete change. You would like that, wouldn't you ? You would like to get out of this dismal, choking town into the fresh air ?”

Fanny drew in her breath. “ Oh, how I should like it ! But we can't go, can we, Philip ?”

“ Why not ? I am sick of London myself, and I should ask for nothing better than to shake off the dust from my shoes against it, and depart—at all events for a time. Signora Tommasini was mentioning Italy to me to-day ; do you remember how we used to talk of going to live in Italy ? What should you say to Florence, now ? Do you think a fine warm sun and blue skies would bring the roses back into your face ?”

A pink flush had already mounted into Fanny's cheeks, and her eyes had grown brighter. “ I don't think I should mind where we went,” said she ; any place would suit me that suited you, dear—any place, except this dreadful London. But Italy !—oh, it would be like Heaven ! And perhaps, if we were there—perhaps——”

“ Well ?”

“ Perhaps—don't be angry, Philip,” murmured Fanny, glancing up into his face as she twisted one of his coat-buttons nervously between her thin fingers ; “ but I was thinking that perhaps, if we were there, you wouldn't have such a great many friends, and then——”

“And then I shouldn’t always leave you to your own devices, as I have done lately. Ah, Fan, I have been a selfish brute, I’m afraid; but I’m going to turn over a new leaf now, and we’ll forget all our troubles, and go and live in Arcadia—you never heard of Arcadia, did you? Well, my dear, it’s the place where the Dresden china shepherds and shepherdesses live when they’re at home—a delightful country, where it is always spring, and the sheep trot about with broad blue neckties on, and everybody goes to bed at sunset, and love is eternal, and latch-keys are unknown. You won’t discover it in your atlas; but I dare say you and I may manage to find our way there, if we try.”

Philip went on talking this pleasant nonsense until he succeeded in making his wife laugh for the first time since her great sorrow. He was perfectly sincere at the moment, and was greatly enamoured of the notion of escape from all the vexations and vanities of a cold-hearted metropolis; but of course, when he thought it over in the prosaic daylight, he perceived that nothing short of a miracle could render such escape possible. Who was to defray the cost of a journey to Florence? Who was to pay the tradesmen’s bills? Above all, who was to pay Lord Salford?

So, although he continued to talk in a vague way about Italy, no preparations for immediate departure were made; but he did so far redeem his promise of turning over a new leaf that for ten successive days he contrived to reach home before midnight, and he was so kind and thoughtful and like his old self that, during those ten days, poor Fanny lived in a fool’s paradise. It was a sort of St. Martin’s summer; the last gleam of pale sunshine that was to fall upon a life which had hardly had its fair share of brightness.

CHAPTER XX.

FREE.

PHILIP MARESCALCHI, like some other adventurers who have thrown the dice with Fortune for more important stakes, had a vague confidence in his star. He had so often been upon the verge of a catastrophe, and had been preserved just in the nick of time by some lucky accident or other, that he more than half believed that chance must have a favour for him, and that in his case the worst would never really come to the worst. In luck, and out of luck—that was his theory of life; and the one state must in the long run follow the other, just as the red must eventually follow the black at roulette. But now for a long time his star had been under a cloud; one stroke of bad luck had been succeeded by another, and at last the dreaded climax came.

“Look here, Marescalchi,” said Lord Salford, meeting him one morning at the Club and taking him aside; “this sort of thing’s utter rot. You haven’t paid me for Lord knows how long, and all the time I’ve got

to pay other fellows, don't you see. If you can't settle, say so, and then I shall know where I am."

"I don't know what you mean," said Philip; "of course I shall settle. I haven't got the money in my waistcoat-pocket. One hardly expects to be dunned in this way."

"I ain't dunning you," returned the other. "All I know is that when I lose, I have to pay; and I don't see why other fellows shouldn't do the same. Of course if they *can't* pay, they can't. Only, when that's so, I think it ought to be known."

"All right; you shall have your money in two or three days," answered Philip desperately. "You don't expect me to sit down and write you a cheque straight off the reel, I suppose."

Lord Salford smiled in a peculiarly exasperating manner, stuck his hands in his pockets, looked up at the ceiling, and whistled a tune. "Let's see," he said presently; "this is Wednesday. Shall we say Saturday morning?"

Philip nodded, left the Club, and walked straight off to Signora Tommasini's hotel with the resolute step of a man who has made up his mind to have a tooth out, and feels that the sooner the operation is over the better. There were, as he plainly perceived, but two alternatives open to him: he must apply either to the Signora or to Margaret; and he chose the course which seemed likely to be productive of the least misery to himself.

The Signora was at home and alone; and in the course of about an hour Philip had made his predicament fully known to her. He did not at once state the object of his visit, nor disclose the whole amount of the sum which he would have to raise by hook or by crook before the Saturday morning, but allowed these details to be drawn from him little by little, bewailing himself bitterly the while, calling himself by many opprobrious epithets, and vowing that he would have nothing to do with Lord Salford for the future. When he had quite done, the Signora, who had listened to some parts of his recital with a rather grave face, thanked him for having fulfilled his part of what she was pleased to call their agreement.

"I told you I would help you," said she, "and I will, with all my heart. Only, to be candid, I did not think you would want quite so much at one time. I don't say that to blame you, or because I shall have any difficulty in providing you with what you require, but because it will be necessary for me to see my stockbroker before I can give it to you."

Philip groaned dismally.

"Now, now, now," said the Signora, "you are not to make a fuss about it. What is money meant for except to be spent? And surely I, who have not a near relation in the world, may invest my money as I think fit. But, for all that, I am a woman of business; I know what things are worth, and I mean to have an equivalent for my loan."

Philip looked interrogatively at her broad, good-tempered face.

"You say," she continued, "that you don't intend to play cards with Lord Salford any more. Now you are in my power, and I shall make you go further than that. You must give up play altogether."

"My dear Signora Tommasini, you may impose any conditions you please upon me, except that. If I give up cards, how in the world am I to repay you your loan?"

"You will repay me, with interest at the rate of five per cent., when you are receiving as large a salary as I am now. I look upon your voice as excellent security; but I am not going to allow you to encumber the property any further. See what a woman of business I am! There is no occasion for you to thank me," she added, as Philip began, rather shamefacedly, to stammer out some expressions of gratitude. "It is true that I am doing you a small service; but I am giving myself a great deal of pleasure at the same time."

This singular woman was radiant. Nothing could be more obvious than that she was about to make a free gift of a sum which very few people in England could part with and not miss; but we mortals are so constituted that even the most clear-sighted of us can easily be brought to shut our eyes to humiliating facts, and it is by no means certain that Philip did not leave the house with an impression that the Signora knew what she was about, and was placing her money, if not advantageously, at least securely.

Two days later he called upon her again, by her request, and found her waiting for him, with a cheque for four figures, duly written out and signed, before her.

"It's all wrong, you know; I have no business to be taking this from you," said he, at the same time allowing the slip of paper to be thrust into his hand.

"Give it back to me, then," she answered calmly. "Perhaps, after all, I should do better to invest it in the Funds."

"I am quite sure you would," said Philip, with a long face; and he held out the cheque, which, however, the Signora did not take.

"No," she said; "it would not be worth while to trouble my broker again. As you have got it, you may as well keep it."

"And suppose I were to drop down dead to-morrow?"

"I should still have enough left to buy mourning with. And, besides, I hope I should be too sorry for the loss of my friend to think much about the loss of my money."

Philip sighed deeply, but pocketed the cheque. "I don't know how or why it is," he remarked meditatively, "but women have been awfully good to me all my life. I believe you are superior to us men in every way. You are certainly more generous than we are."

"And less just," said the Signora, with a laugh and a shrug of her fat shoulders. "Bah! we are generous to-day and shabby to-morrow. Take care how you let a woman get you into her power. That is good

advice ; but it is thrown away upon you, for you will always be in the power of some woman, my friend."

"You told me the other day that I was in yours," observed Philip, smiling.

"So you were, for the moment ; and did I not take advantage of my opportunity ? But I am what they call *bonne diablesse* ; I wish you may never fall into worse hands than mine."

"So do I, with all my heart," answered he fervently.

Lord Salford, to his evident surprise, was paid in full on the following morning ; and, as Philip descended the steps of the Club, after discharging his debt, he promised himself that he would hardly take the value of his subscription out of that establishment for the future. Henceforth his evenings should be spent at home. From card-playing he was debarred by a promise which he was determined to keep ; and he resolved also to renounce evening parties, or at all events only to attend such of them as it would be really wrong, in view of ultimate professional advancement, to neglect.

"I see the woods of Arcadia looming in the distance, Fan," he said, the same night, to his wife, after dining contentedly with her off burnt mutton chops and rice-pudding ; and she smiled faintly, and answered, "Do you, dear ?" in that patient, pathetic way which had lately become habitual to her.

Perhaps it was the removal of the pressure of debt from his mind, perhaps it was his increased leisure, that enabled Philip to notice something which he might have noticed long before, and which now began to cause him serious anxiety. Fanny was growing paler and thinner every day ; she had no appetite, slept very little, and, in spite of all efforts to appear cheerful, there was a listlessness in her every movement which would have told its own tale to a less observant spectator than her husband. He, now that his tardy apprehensions had been roused, was even more alarmed than the occasion seemed to warrant, and would not listen to her assurances that there was nothing the matter with her. He insisted upon calling in the doctor, who, after a somewhat lengthy examination, had no very satisfactory report to give of his patient.

"There is not any definite disease," he said ; "but I should be wrong if I did not warn you that there may be something definite before long. In cases of this kind drugs are of very little service. I have, however——" and here the usual two half-sheets of note-paper scrawled over with hieroglyphics were handed to Philip. "What I should advise," continued the doctor, "would be complete change of air and scene. You should take Mrs. Marescalchi down to the seaside, or, better still, to the Continent. Italy, for instance, would be a good country to go to at this season of the year. In her present state, a chill might be a serious matter." And so forth, and so forth.

As soon as the doctor was gone, Philip went straight into his dressing-room, locked himself in, and gave way to despair. At that moment he

felt firmly persuaded that Fanny was going to die, and the bare idea of such a catastrophe overwhelmed him with grief and remorse. There had not been much sympathy between them of late, and it was not so very long since he had been lamenting his folly in having ever married her; but for these very reasons his pain was the greater now. He was in no mood for self-scrutiny; but if he had got to the bottom of his emotion he would have found that it was not so much the dread of his possible loss as intense pity for Fanny herself that was bringing the tears into his eyes. Death was to Philip the greatest of all possible ill's, the one misfortune for which no consolation could be found, the end of everything. If he had been offered his choice between death and penal servitude for life he would have accepted the latter alternative without an instant's hesitation, and immediately begun calculating his chances of getting out on a ticket-of-leave. And if, indeed, this terrible thing should happen to poor Fanny, would it not be in a great measure his fault? What evil spirit had prompted that doctor to mention the word Italy? Italy! as if a journey to Italy were as simple a thing as taking a hansom to Oxford Street! What inhuman brutes doctors were! "Idiot that I was!" thought Philip; "why, while I was about it, didn't I ask the Signora for another thousand pounds, instead of telling her the exact amount that I had to hand over to Salford the next day? I can't go back to her and ask her for more now. No, hang it all, I *can't* do that. And my poor little Fan must die because I haven't the money to pay for railway-tickets! There's Meg—but she sent me money only a week ago; and what excuse could I make?"

At this moment there came a tap at the door, and presently Fanny herself entered.

"Philip," said she quietly, "the doctor thinks I shall never get any better, doesn't he?"

"Never get any better," cried Philip, immediately assuming an air of great cheerfulness; "my dear child, what rubbish have you been taking into your head? He says there is nothing in the world the matter with you."

Fanny smiled. "You need not be afraid of telling me," she said; "I don't mind."

"I do, though, whether you do or not—at least, I *should* mind. But I give you my word of honour that he assured me you had no disease at all, and one can't die without a disease, can one? What he said was that you were out of sorts and wanted a change. He spoke of the seaside, or—well, he suggested Italy, oddly enough."

And then Philip broke out into lamentations. Italy, he said, was out of the question. He had not liked to say so before; but he had been thinking it over, and he had found that Italy would be altogether beyond them. He had been careless and extravagant, and there were a number of small bills hanging over him which he could not well leave the country without paying. And, worse than that, the

money-box was pretty nearly empty. He was going on to express much self-reproach; but Fanny interrupted him, and relieved him greatly by saying that she, too, had been thinking things over, and that she had come to the conclusion that she would not at all care about Italy just now. There was no pleasure in travelling when one was out of health, and she dreaded the fatigue; and, in short, a week at Margate, if that could be managed, would suit her a great deal better.

Philip had not contrived to deceive her, but she was perfectly successful in deceiving him. Her first glimpse of his face, as she came into the room, had shown her his distress, and it was not to be thought of that he should distress himself on her account. She therefore addressed herself to the task of convincing him that her illness was an imaginary one; and the task was easy enough, seeing that he asked nothing better than to be convinced. Perhaps he suspected that the activity which she displayed during the next few days was the result of an effort, that her loquacity was scarcely natural, and her laughter a little forced; but what then? If she was struggling to free herself from the state of lethargy into which she had sunk since the child's death, so much the better. Was not her sickness, after all, rather one of the mind than of the body? Women were like that; their spirits always told upon their health. It did not take Philip long to reach the point of laughing at his first fears.

In the course of the following week he took Fanny down to Margate according to her wish, and the effect of the change was so speedily beneficial as to be almost startling. Margate is hardly what most people would consider a cheerful spot in the winter time; but the clear air, the broad stretch of sea, and the sight of the breakers tumbling in were full of life and refreshment to a country-bred girl, who for twelve mortal months and more had had nothing but bricks and mortar to look at and only the smoke-laden atmosphere of London to breathe. It chanced also that there came in this month of February, as there often does, a fortnight of mild, spring-like weather, so that it was even possible to sit out on the sands in the sunshine, and, if the bathing-machines had not been hauled up out of sight, it would not have seemed an absolutely outrageous thing to contemplate a dip in salt water. There was now no longer any occasion for Fanny to make believe. The fresh breezes brought the colour into her pale cheeks; she felt her strength returning day by day; she was able to take long walks with the best and kindest of husbands; insensibly she was becoming reconciled to her great sorrow; she, too, began to see glimpses of the woods of Arcady. Doctors are not always reassured by these very rapid improvements, which have something in common with the quick rise of the barometer after a fall; but neither Philip nor Fanny knew much about doctors and disease, and were as anxious as everybody is to keep such subjects out of their minds.

It was a very pleasant and a very successful holiday, as far as it went; but it did not go very far, nor could it last very long. Lack of

money; the remonstrances of Steinberger, who could not for the life of him understand what his pupil wanted to do at Margate at that season of the year; a sudden shift of the wind into the north-east, with flying grey clouds and cat's-ice in every puddle—all these things combined to sound the recall, and to warn the wanderers that London, though it might have been forgotten, had not moved from its position, and was waiting to receive them back into its grimy embrace. That bleak north-easter accompanied them on their homeward journey; it made its way through the ill-fitting windows of the railway-carriage, chilling the travellers to their bones; and it was the means of providing poor Fanny with a very definite complaint in the form of a sharp attack of bronchitis.

For a short time after their return to Conduit Street it seemed as if this attack was not likely to prove a serious one; but afterwards the symptoms became more acute, and it was soon evident that the patient was in for a long and perhaps dangerous illness.

"Ah," said the doctor, who had again been summoned; "you ought to have taken my advice, Mr. Marescalchi; you ought to have left England. I warned you, as you may remember, of the risk of these spring winds."

"It is a pity that you did not insist more upon the point," said poor Philip meekly; "but there is not much good in talking about that now. The question is, will she get over it?"

"Now, my dear sir," remonstrated the doctor, who was certainly a very irritating person, "what an unreasonable thing that is to ask! How can I possibly tell what turn an illness may take? Your wife's age should be in her favour; on the other hand, her state of debility is such that—that, in short, we must consider it an anxious case. Careful nursing may do much for her."

This latter need was supplied by the advent of Aunt Keziah, who now once more took up her abode under Philip's roof; and it must be said for Aunt Keziah that she came out strong under the circumstances, sitting up all night, taking but a few hours' rest during the day, and absolutely refusing all professional assistance.

"None of your 'orspital nurses for me," cried she, with the inveterate prejudice of her class. "No stranger shall come near my sister's child so long as I have the use of my arms and legs, and that's flat. So you'll be so good as not mention the subjeck again to me, Philip, if you please."

Philip no longer objected to be addressed by his Christian name. He was a great deal too miserable to pay attention to such trifles, and Mrs. Webber herself was moved to pity a man whom she secretly despised by the sight of his utterly woebegone aspect. He was not allowed to be much in the sick-room, where in truth he did no good and only got in the way; he could not bring himself to go out, and probably the hours that he spent in these days, standing at the window

of the dingy drawing-room in Conduit Street and staring blankly at the passers-by and the cabmen on the stand below, were the most wretched of his whole life. He told Mrs. Webber that he only wished he were dying too; and though she did not believe him, she was sorry for him, and she confided to the landlady, with whom she had struck up a friendship by the bedside of the sufferer, that she would say for that nevvv of hers that he had a feeling heart.

It was not, however, in the man's nature to grieve long after this fashion. A slight improvement in Fanny's condition afforded him an excuse for recovering his spirits, for declaring that she would pull through now and be as well as ever again, and for resuming his neglected singing lessons. Throughout her long illness he alternated thus between the depths of despair and extravagant hopefulness; but, as time went on, the latter became his usual state of mind. It was so much pleasanter to hope than to despair, and, as Mrs. Webber sagely remarked, hope was a thing as did harm to nobody.

Philip, then, began to go about and to see his friends much as before. He looked in at the Club occasionally; had Walter Brune to dine with him once or twice, "lest Meg should fancy that something had happened," he said to himself; he called at certain houses where he did not wish to be forgotten, and was persuaded to sing at a few afternoon entertainments. One person, however, he persistently avoided. It has passed into a proverb that the surest way to lose sight of a friend is to lend him money; but it was not an overburdening sense of obligation alone that caused Philip to steer clear of Signora Tommasini, inventing heaven knows how many cunningly-devised fables to account for his neglect, and despatching them to her by post. He was afraid that if he were to find himself alone with this sympathising and generous ally, she might get his secret out of him. His nerves, he knew, were not to be depended upon at this time, and a kind word might cause him to betray himself in a manner which he would probably afterwards regret. Philip had seen more of women than of men during his life, and had perhaps learnt to understand some of their peculiarities. He hardly believed in the common report that the Signora harboured matrimonial designs upon him; but at the same time he felt very sure that she would not be pleased to hear that he was already married. Therefore he judged it best to keep out of danger's way.

Meanwhile Fanny was growing slowly better. Better, that is, in a certain sense; for, although all risk from the bronchitis was over, she was still too weak to get up. Those who watched her said that she would be up in another week; then, when that time had elapsed, they put the event off for yet another week, and after that the subject of her leaving her bed was dropped altogether. She herself was well aware that she would never leave it alive; and one morning she said as much to Philip, begging him not to be angry with her for telling the truth.

Philip, nevertheless, made a great show of being angry, scolded her for giving way to gloomy fancies, pointed out that, if she were as ill as she supposed, she would never have got over the bronchitis, and declared that she was doing all that she could to retard her recovery by allowing herself to think that there was any doubt about it. But she laid her thin hand on his arm, looking up at him deprecatingly, and his voice died away.

"We can't always go on pretending, can we, dear?" said she. "I know you will be sorry at first; and I should like to stay with you—for some things. But I don't mind going. Before I was so ill—at the time just after dear baby died—I used to be very miserable, and sometimes I fancied that you—well, that you did not care for me quite so much as you once did. But that is all over, and we won't talk about it. I used to be wicked enough to think that you would be rather glad to get rid of me; I don't think that now. But, Philip, while I have been lying here I have thought over a great many things, and I can see that it is better—oh, ever so much better!—as it is. You will think so, too, some day."

Didn't he almost think so already? The question flashed across Philip's consciousness, and was gone before he had time to fix it there.

"Some day," Fanny went on, "you will see that it would have been impossible ever to change me into a lady. Though I think I *have* improved a little," she could not help adding; "I don't leave out my h's now, do I? And my hands are not red any more—but perhaps that is because I am so ill."

"Fan!" exclaimed Philip, half laughing, half crying, "you are the greatest goose that ever lived. You break my heart when you talk like that. Did I ever accuse you of not being a lady?"

"No, dear," she answered consideringly; "I don't know that you ever did. But of course I thought about it a good deal; and then Aunt Keziah used to go on about silk purses and sow's ears. Poor Aunt Keziah! we should have had to cut her, I suppose; and I don't think I could have borne to do that. Nobody knows how good and kind she has been to me all this time."

Philip dropped on his knees by the side of the bed, exclaiming, "Oh, hush, my darling! you are not going to die; you are not going to have any more trouble. I will work all day for you, and you shall have everything you can wish for, and your Aunt Keziah shall be welcome whenever she chooses to come to us, if only you will get well and be my own bright little Fan again."

Perhaps he would not have been so overcome, perhaps he would not have said so much as this, if he had not felt that there was no hope. Fanny, for her part, was not at all overcome. She looked at him half wonderingly and with a great kindness and pity, as she passed her wasted hand over his hair. Already the hand of death was upon her, and she saw the world with the clear eyes of those who are passing for

ever beyond the reach of its pettinesses. She understood her husband better now than she had ever done in the happy days that were past; but she did not love him the less because she understood him. There was a certain helplessness about the man which endeared him to all women, and made them hate to see him suffer, even though they might know that his suffering would not last long.

"It is much better as it is," she repeated. "We have had a very happy time together, my dear, and there's nothing to regret—no quarrels nor cross words; nothing, except baby's death. And now I am so glad—oh, so *glad* that I have not left him behind me." Her face lighted up and the tears came into her eyes, as she thought of this. "And, Philip, you must not make yourself miserable about me after I am gone. You must see plenty of people, and be always busy; and then, after a time, if you wished—if you thought that you——"

She broke off, and glanced up inquiringly.

"I mean, if you ever thought of marrying again, you must not suppose that I should mind. I think I should like you to have some one to take care of you; I think, perhaps, some day, you will marry that Nellie Brune whom you used to talk to me about sometimes. Your people rather wished it, didn't they?"

"My people?" said Philip, "I have got no people. Meg—Mrs. Stanniforth, you know—has an idea of something of the kind, I believe; but I don't want to marry Nellie—or anybody. Besides, she has no money."

"Hasn't she?" said Fanny dreamily. "But you will make money; and it would never do for you to marry a woman for the sake of her fortune; she would find it out, and then you would both be miserable. No, you will marry Nellie Brune; and you needn't tell her anything about me, and so it will all pass away and be forgotten. She repeated several times "all be forgotten—all forgotten."

Philip stood silently watching her for a long time. Once or twice she murmured Nellie Brune's name and once or twice his own, and so fell asleep with a smile upon her lips.

After this day many weeks elapsed during which Fanny grew apparently neither better nor worse. She suffered no pain, slept a great deal, and during her waking hours seemed quite content to lie still and listen to Aunt Keziah, who had produced a well-thumbed Bible, and would read long extracts from it in a loud, unmodulated voice. Seeing her so calm, Philip, too, became easier in mind. The violence of his first grief had spent itself, and was beyond his recalling; he began to admit, as Fanny had done, that all was for the best. Acquiescence in the inevitable was with him not so much a part of philosophy as of nature, and when one thing was past hoping for, he could not for the life of him help turning his eyes towards something else. There even came a time when he almost wished for the end of the present state of affairs. The doctor apprehended no immediate danger, would not yet say

that the case was an absolutely hopeless one, thought it quite possible that his patient might linger on through the spring and summer months, and so forth; and in the meantime Philip's bills were mounting up; Margaret was writing anxious and urgent letters, begging him to come down and see her, if it were only for a few days; Walter Brune, too, seemed to suspect that there was some mystery afoot. Perhaps it was hardly strange that Philip should half long for the liberty that might be so near. He only half longed for it; he was ashamed of the thoughts that would sometimes force their way into his mind, and a chance word or look from Fanny sufficed to convert him, for the time, into as heart-broken a husband as Aunt Keziah could have wished to contemplate.

After all, he had not long to wait for the end. When it came, it seemed to have come suddenly, though, in truth, nothing could have been more gradual than its approach. Little by little the dying woman's brain had been giving way, for some days she had scarcely recognised any one and had been somewhat excited at times, "talking a deal of rubbitch," as Mrs. Webber said, and asking constantly for her baby to be brought to her. Still, it was not supposed that she was much worse than she had been until one evening when she began to complain of being cold, and nothing that they could do would warm her; and then Mrs. Webber, who, as she mentioned with a sort of pride, "had seen many a one die afore now," knew what was coming.

"She'll go off quite quiet, you'll see," said this person of experience, nodding at Philip, who was holding Fanny's hand, "they mostly in general do. There's some as die hard, as you might say, and there's some as die easy; there's them as is ready to meet their Maker, and them as didn't ought for to feel so. But, lor, dear me! when it comes to the last, 'tis much the same with them all."

But Philip was not listening to the results of Mrs. Webber's observations, for he had felt a sudden pressure of his hand; and now Fanny's eyes were opened wide, she was looking at him in a troubled way, and was evidently trying to say something. He bent down his head to catch any faint whisper that might pass her lips; but all at once her voice came back to her, and she spoke quite loud, though with long pauses between the words.

"Dear—I wanted to say—I'm so sorry—I let the fire out—that night."

"She's a wandering, poor dear!" said Aunt Keziah. But Philip understood what that fond and foolish little wife of his was thinking of. With her feet upon the very brink of the dark river, she had been confusedly trying to examine her conscience, and it had accused her of no worse offence than this.

Those were her last words. She closed her eyes as soon as she had uttered them; and so faint was her breathing that neither of the bystanders could have told the precise moment at which her heart ceased to beat.

They buried her beside her baby in the saddest, dreariest cemetery in the world, not excepting Père-la-Chaise. A fine, drizzling rain was falling while the brief rite was hurried through; and as Philip turned away from the grave he shuddered from head to foot, muttering, "I shall never be able to come back here again."

"I don't think as you ever will come back, sir," said Mrs. Webber quietly.

Mrs. Webber was quite respectful now; and if there was any sarcasm in her speech, it was only sarcasm of that deferential kind which inferiors may permit themselves to use towards their superiors. Philip was Mr. Marescalchi again now; he was no longer her nephew, no longer a man over whom she had the smallest hold; and, being a sensible woman, she recognised the change.

Philip walked hastily out of the burying-ground, and hailed the first hansom that he met. The sun burst out as he was whirled through the crowded streets back to London, back to the world, back to life and liberty. He tried to feel unhappy, but he could not. His spirits rose in spite of himself; a great weight was off his mind; he was free! When he reached Conduit Street the blinds had been drawn up, the sun was streaming through the open windows into the shabby little drawing-room, which had been swept and made tidy during his absence. There was nothing here to remind him that he had ever been a husband and a father; all poor Fanny's things had been carried away by Aunt Keziah; Aunt Keziah herself was gone back to Islington, never to cross his path again. He was like the widower in the ballad, "a youth lighthearted and content." Truly his star had been favourable to him. He had done a foolish thing, but no disgraceful one. At that moment Philip was not very far from thinking that he had had such wonderful luck because he had deserved to be lucky. Would not any one who had heard the history of his relations with Fanny have said that he had behaved like a gentleman throughout? How many men would have married a girl from a confectioner's shop? How many, having married her, would have remained true to her from first to last, risking detection for her sake, risking ridicule, risking social ruin, and hardly giving so much as a thought to these dangers?

Then, while he yet exulted, there came upon him a sudden and complete revulsion of feeling. He remembered that he was alone; that it was not in the least a question of what others might say of him, but of what he might be able to say of himself to himself. For one moment he saw the truth—saw that he was glad that Fanny was dead; glad that that kind and faithful heart would never flutter with delight again when he came home at night to recount his triumphs; glad that he should never again throughout all eternity hear the sound of the childish laughter which had once been so sweet to him. He saw that he had never really cared for her—nay, that he had never really cared for any single person or thing in the wide world but himself.

There is something so hideous, so revolting in utter selfishness that it is a very good thing indeed for some of us that it usually brings mental blindness with it. Philip was so scared by the spectre which he had raised that the thought of spending an evening alone with it was one that he could not by any means face. Therefore he dined at his Club, and afterwards went to the opera, where he saw and spoke to Signora Tommasini for the first time for many weeks.

"I have been ill," he said shortly, in answer to her pertinacious inquiries as to where he had been during all this long interval; and she believed him, for, in truth, his face looked pale and drawn, and he seemed altogether unlike himself.

Voltaire in England.

PART II.

THE variety and extent of Voltaire's English studies are, considering his comparatively short residence and his numerous occupations during that residence, amazing. He surveyed us on all sides, and his survey was not confined to the living world before him; it extended back to the world of the past, for, as his writings prove, he was versed both in our antiquities and in our history. But the subjects which most interested him were, as was natural, philosophy and polite letters. In philosophy two great movements were at this time passing over England; the one was in a scientific, the other in a theological or metaphysical direction; the one emanated from Bacon and Newton, the other from that school of deists which, originating with Herbert and Hobbes, had found its modern exponents in Tindal, Toland, Collins, and Woolston. His guides in these studies were Bolingbroke and Dr. Samuel Clarke. Of all Newton's disciples Clarke was the most generally accomplished. In theology, in metaphysics, in natural science, in mathematics, and in pure scholarship, he was almost equally distinguished. He had lived on terms of close intimacy with Newton, whose *Optics* he had translated into Latin. He was as minutely versed in the writings of Bacon and Locke as in the writings of Descartes and Leibnitz; and of the learned controversies of his time there was scarcely one in which he had not taken a leading part. With this eminent man Voltaire first came into contact in 1726. At that time their conversation turned principally on metaphysics. Voltaire was fascinated by the boldness of Clarke's views, and blindly followed him. In his own expressive phrase, "Clarke sautait dans l'abîme, et j'osai l'y suivre." But he soon recovered himself, and was on firm ground again.

His acquaintance with Clarke probably led to his acquaintance with another distinguished disciple of Newton. This was Dr. Henry Pemberton. Pemberton was then busy preparing for the press the first popular exposition of Newton's system, a work which appeared in 1728 under the title of *A View of Sir Isaac Newton's Philosophy*. It is clear that Voltaire had seen this work either in proof or in manuscript. For in a letter to Thiériot dated some months before the treatise was published he speaks of it in a manner which implies that he had inspected it. It was most likely under Pemberton's auspices that he commenced the study of the *Principia* and *Optics* which he afterwards resumed more seriously at Cirey. That the work was of immense

service to him in his Newtonian studies is certain. Indeed his own account of the Newtonian philosophy in the *Lettres Philosophiques*, and in the *Éléments de la Philosophie de Newton*, is in a large measure based on Pemberton's exegesis.

From Newton, whose *Metaphysics* disgusted him, he proceeded to Locke. Locke's *Essay* he perused and reperused with delight. It became his philosophical gospel. In his writings and in his conversation he scarcely ever alluded to it except in terms of almost extravagant eulogy; and to Locke he remained loyal to the last. "For thirty years," he writes in a letter dated July 1768, "I have been persecuted by a cloud of fanatics because I said that Locke is the Hercules of Metaphysics who has fixed the boundaries of the human mind."* His acquaintance with Bacon was probably slight, and what he knew of his Latin works was, we suspect, what he had picked up in conversation from Bolingbroke and Clarke. No man who had read the *Novum Organum* would speak of it as Voltaire speaks of it in his Twelfth Letter. But Bacon's English writings, the *Essays* that is to say, and the History of Henry VII., he had certainly consulted. He appears also to have turned over the works of Hobbes, Berkeley, and Cudworth. Nor did his indefatigable curiosity rest here. He took a lively interest in natural science, and was acquainted with several members of the Royal Society, and particularly with the venerable President, Sir Hans Sloane, to whom he presented a copy of the English *Essays*.† Of that society he was some years after elected a Fellow, an interesting fact which has apparently escaped the researches of his biographers.‡

But what most engaged his attention was the controversy then raging between the opponents and the apologists of Christianity. It was now at its height. Upwards of two years had passed since Anthony Collins had published his *Discourse on the Grounds and Reasons of the Christian Religion*. No work of that kind had made so deep an impression on the public mind. It had been denounced from the pulpit; it had elicited innumerable replies from the press. Other works of a similar kind succeeded, each in its turn aggravating the controversy. In 1727 appeared, dedicated to the Bishop of London, the first of Woolston's *Six Discourses on the Miracles of Christ*, a work which brought into the field the most distinguished ecclesiastics then living. We believe that Voltaire owed infinitely more to Bolingbroke than to all the other English deists put together, but how carefully he had followed the course of this controversy is obvious from innumerable passages in his subsequent writings. Of Woolston in particular he always speaks with

* See the very interesting letter to Horace Walpole printed in the appendix to the *Historical Memoirs of the Author of the Henriade*.

† See the copy with the autograph inscription in the British Museum.

‡ He was elected a Fellow on November 3, 1743. (Archives of the Royal Society.)

great respect, and he has, in an article in the *Dictionnaire Philosophique*, given a long and appreciative account of the labours of that courageous freethinker. Nor was his admiration confined to mere eulogy, for when, three years later, Woolston was imprisoned and fined for his heterodox opinions, Voltaire at once wrote off from France voluntarily to be responsible for a third of the sum required.*

In the winter of 1727 he published a little volume, which is not only among the curiosities, but among the marvels of literature. It contained two essays. The first was entitled "An Essay upon the Civil Wars in France," the other, "An Essay upon Epic Poetry." Both these essays are composed in English—not in such English as we should expect to find written by one who had acquired the language, but in such English as would in truth have reflected no discredit on Dryden or Swift. If we remember that at the time when he accomplished this feat he had only been eighteen months in England, and that he was, as he informs us in the preface, writing in a language which he was scarcely able to follow in conversation, his achievement may be fairly pronounced to be without parallel in linguistic triumphs.† As the work is neither generally known nor very accessible, we will transcribe a short extract from each discourse. The first essay is an historical sketch of the civil troubles in France between the accession of Francis the Second and the reconciliation of Henry the Fourth with the Church of Rome. The character and position of the Protestants are thus described :—

The Protestants began then to grow numerous, and to be conscious of their strength. The superstition, the dull, ignorant knavery of the monks, the overgrown power of Rome, men's passions for novelty, the ambition of Luther and Calvin, the policy of many princes—all these had given rise and countenance to this sect, free indeed from superstition, but running as headlong towards anarchy as the Church of Rome towards tyranny. The Protestants had been unmercifully persecuted in France, but it is the ordinary effect of persecution to make proselytes. Their sect increased every day amidst the scaffolds and tortures. Condé, Coligni, the two brothers of Coligni, all their adherents, all who were oppressed by the Guises, turned Protestants at once. They united their griefs, their vengeance, and their interests together, so that a revolution both in the State and in religion was at hand.

The second essay, which is a dissertation on Epic Poetry, and a review of the principal epic poems of antiquity and of modern Europe, is a piece not unworthy of a place beside the best of Dryden's prefaces. The remarks on Virgil, Lucan, and Tasso are admirable, and the critique on *Paradise Lost*, which is described as "the noblest work which human imagination hath ever attempted," gives us a higher idea of Voltaire's critical powers than any of his French writings. Indeed, the whole treatise well deserves attentive study. The marvellous purity, vigour, and

* Duvernet, *Vie de Voltaire*, p. 72.

† He told Martin Sherlock that he was never able to pronounce the English language perfectly, but that his ear was sensitively alive to the harmony of the language and the poetry.—*Letters from an English Traveller*.

elegance of the style will be at once evident from the following extract, which is, we may add, a fair average sample :—

The greatest part of the critics have filched the rules of epic poetry from the books of Homer, according to the custom, or rather to the weakness, of men who mistake commonly the beginning of an art for the principles of the art itself, and are apt to believe that everything must be by its own nature what it was when contrived at first. But as Homer wrote two poems of a quite different nature, and as the *Æneid* of Virgil partakes of the *Iliad* and of the *Odyssey*, the commentators were forced to establish different rules to reconcile Homer with himself, and other new rules again to make Virgil agree with Homer, just as the astronomers laboured under the necessity of adding to or taking from their systems, and of bringing in concentric and eccentric circles, as they discovered new motions in the heavens. The ignorance of the ancients was excusable, and their search after the unfathomable system of nature was to be commended, because it is certain that nature hath its own principles, unvariable and unerring, and as worthy of our search as remote from our conceptions. But it is not with the inventions of art as with the works of nature.

If Voltaire was able after a few months' residence in London to produce such prose as this, it is not too much to say that he might with time and practice have taken his place among our national classics. With the exceptions of De Lolme and Blanco White, it may be doubted whether any writer to whom English was an acquired language has achieved so perfect a mastery over it. It is, however, not improbable that he obtained more assistance in composing these essays than his vanity would allow him to own. The Abbé Desfontaines asserts indeed that the essay on Epic Poetry was composed in French, and that it was then translated into English under the superintendence of Voltaire's "maitre de langue."* But the testimony of that mean and malignant man carries little weight, and if it had not been partially at least confirmed by Spence we should have left it unnoticed. What Spence says is this: "Voltaire consulted Dr. Young about his essay in English, and begged him to correct any gross faults he might find in it. The Doctor set very honestly to work, marked the passages most liable to censure, and when he went to explain himself about them, Voltaire could not avoid bursting out a-laughing in his face." The reason of this ill-timed merriment it is not very easy to see: the anecdote is perhaps imperfectly reported. But in spite of Desfontaines and Spence, there can be no doubt that the Essays are what they pretend to be, the genuine work of Voltaire. We have only to turn to his English correspondence at this period to see that he was quite equal to their production. The little book was favourably received. In the following year a second edition was called for, a third followed at no long interval, and in 1731 it reached a fourth; a Discourse on Tragedy, which is merely a translation of the French "Discours sur la Tragédie" prefixed to Brutus, being added. And it long held its own. Its popularity is sufficiently attested by the fact that in 1760 it was reprinted at Dublin, with a short notice

* *La Voltairomanie*, p. 46

attributed, but attributed erroneously, to Swift, who had of course been long dead.

Voltaire was not the man to waste his energy on the production of a mere *tour de force*. The volume had an immediate practical object. That object was to prepare the public for the appearance of the *Henriade*, which was now receiving the finishing touches, and was almost ready for the printer. It was probably to facilitate its publication that he removed about this time (end of 1727) from Wandsworth to London, where he resided, as the superscriptions of two of his letters show, in Maiden Lane, Covent Garden, at the sign of the White Peruke. Nor is Maiden Lane the only part of London associated with Voltaire during this period. It would seem that Billiter Square is entitled to the honour of having once numbered him among its occupants. This we gather from an undated letter addressed to John Brinsden, Bolingbroke's confidential secretary,* in which Brinsden is directed to address his reply to Mr. Cavalier, Belitery (*sic*) Square, by the Royal Exchange, a request which Voltaire would scarcely have made had he not been residing there. In Billiter Square, then, to borrow the words of a contemporary topographer, "a very handsome, open, and airy place, with good new brick buildings," he would be within a few paces of his agents, Messrs. Simon and Benezet.

Of the many letters which were doubtless written by him at this time, some have been preserved. One is addressed to Swift, to whom he had a few months before given a letter of introduction to the Count de Morville. He sends him a copy of the *Essays*, informs him that the *Henriade* is almost ready, and asks him to exert his interest to procure subscribers in Ireland. In another letter he solicits the patronage of the Earl of Oxford, informing him of the distinguished part which one of his ancestors plays in the *Henriade*, alluding to his own personal acquaintance with Achilles de Harley, and importuning the Earl to grant him the favour of an interview.† With Thiériot, on whom he relied to push the poem in France, he regularly corresponded. All through the summer and early autumn of 1728 he was hard at work on the manuscript or the proofs,‡ and had apparently returned to Wandsworth. But this was not the only task he had in hand. He was busy with his *Essai sur la Poésie Epique*, which is not, he is careful to explain, a translation of his English essay, but an independent work, a work of which the English essay was to be regarded as the preliminary sketch.§ It was afterwards

* Preserved in Colet's *Relics of Literature*, p. 70.

† Unprinted letter among the manuscripts at Longleat, for a copy of which we are indebted to the kindness of the librarian.

‡ Letter to Thiériot, dated August 1728.

§ See his English letter to Thiériot, wrongly dated by the editors June 1727. The chronology of Voltaire's letters is almost maddening, and we regret to see that there is no attempt made to rectify even the most palpable blunders in the last elaborate Paris edition of the collected works.

prefixed to the *Henriade*. A comparative study of the two will show with what skill he adapts himself even as a critic to the countrymen of Boileau and Racine on the one hand, and to the countrymen of Milton and Addison on the other.

At last the *Henriade* was ready. The subscribers had at first been alarmingly slow in coming forward; but when the day of publication arrived the names on the subscription list amounted to three hundred and forty-four; and among the subscribers were the King, the Queen, and the heads of almost all the noble families connected with the Court. In its first form the poem had been dedicated to Louis XV. That dedication was now cancelled, and a dedication, written in flowing English, to Queen Caroline was substituted. Descartes, said the poet, had inscribed his "Principles" to the Princess Palatine Elizabeth, not because she was a princess, but because of all his readers she understood him best; he too, without presuming to compare himself to Descartes, had ventured to lay his work at the feet of a Queen who was not only the patroness of all arts and sciences, but the best judge of them also. "He reminded her that an English Queen, the great Elizabeth, had been the protectress of Henry IV., and by whom, he asked, can the memory of Henry be so well protected as by one who so much resembles Elizabeth in her personal virtues?" The Queen was not insensible of the honour which had been paid her, and the fortunate poet received a substantial mark of the royal gratitude. It is not easy to determine the exact sum. Voltaire himself states it to have been two thousand crowns (*écus*), which would, supposing he means English crowns, have been equivalent to five hundred pounds sterling. Baculard says it was "six mille livres."* Nor was this all. The King honoured him with his intimacy, and invited him to his private supper parties.† Goldsmith adds, but adds erroneously, that the Queen presented him with her portrait. A portrait of Queen Caroline Voltaire certainly possessed, but it was a medallion, and it came to him, not from the Queen herself, but from the Queen of Prussia. The poem succeeded beyond his most sanguine expectation. Every copy of the quarto impression was disposed of before the day of publication. In the octavo form, three editions were exhausted in less than three weeks, "which I attribute," he says in a letter to a friend, "entirely to the happy choice of the subject, and not to the merit of the poem itself." Owing to the carelessness of Thiériot, he lost the subscription money due to him from France, but the sum realised from the sale in England was undoubtedly considerable. It has been variously estimated: Nicolardot, in his *Ménage et Finances de Voltaire*, calculates it to have been ten thousand francs; and that is the lowest computation. Baculard asserts that from the quarto edition (*édition imprimé par souscriptions*) alone

* Préface d'une édition des Œuvres de M. de Voltaire, Longchamp et Wagnière, vol. ii. p. 492.

† *Id.* same page.

the poet cleared ten thousand crowns. Perhaps we should not be far wrong if we estimated the sum, including the money received from George II., at two thousand pounds sterling. Whatever it was, it formed the nucleus of the most princely fortune ever yet amassed by a man of letters.* The money realised from the sale of the *Henriade* was the more acceptable as it was sorely needed. For upwards of a year he had been in straitened circumstances. To live in society was then an expensive luxury, and the expenses were greatly swelled by the fees which the servants of the aristocracy were permitted to levy on their masters' guests. At no house in London did the abuse reach a higher pitch than at Lord Chesterfield's; and Voltaire, who dined there once, was so annoyed at the imposition that, on Chesterfield asking him to repeat his visit, he declined, sarcastically adding that his lordship's ordinary was too dear.† His wretched health had, moreover, necessitated medical attendance, and had thus added greatly to his expenses. As early as February 1727 we find him complaining of these difficulties to Thiériot: "Vous savez peut-être que les banqueroutes sans ressource que j'ai essayées en Angleterre" (an allusion of course to his mishap with Acosta), "le retranchement de mes rentes, la perte de mes pensions, et les dépenses que m'ont coûtées les maladies dont j'ai été accablé ici, m'ont réduit à un état bien dur."‡ He was now enabled to relieve the necessities of his unfortunate fellow-countrymen, many of whom were assisted by him when he was in London, particularly one St. Hyacinthe.§

When the poem was passing through the press a curious incident occurred. A proof-sheet of the first page had by some accident found its way into the hands of one Dadichy, a Smyrniate Greek, who was at that time residing as an interpreter in London, and who appears to have been a scholar of some pretensions. The poem then opened, not with the simple ringing verses with which it now opens, but with a series of verses of which the first couplet may serve as a specimen:—

Je chante les combats et ce roi généreux,
Qui força les Français à devenir heureux.

The man whose taste had been formed on purer models was justly offended by this obscure and forced epigram. He made his way to Voltaire's residence, and abruptly announcing himself as the "countryman of Homer," proceeded to inform him that Homer never opened his poems with strokes of wit and enigmas. Voltaire had the good sense to take the hint given him by his eccentric visitor, and the lines were altered into the lines with which all the world is familiar.||

* Carlyle (*Life of Frederick*, vol. iii. p. 220) computes Voltaire's annual income during his latter years to have been, according to the money value of the present day, about 20,000*l.*

† John Taylor's *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 330.

‡ *Correspondance Générale*, 1727.

§ Duvernet, p. 72.

|| For this anecdote see *Henriade Variantes du Chant Premier*.

We have not, after a careful search, been able to find any notice or critique of the *Henriade* in journals then current in London. But before the year was out there appeared in an edition published by a firm in Russell Street, Covent Garden, some remarks which are no doubt a fair indication of the impression made by the poem on the mind of contemporary England. The writer, who writes in French, begins by observing that as a rule he cares little for French poetry, it lacks energy, and it is monotonous, but in the *Henriade* he discerns qualities which he has not discerned elsewhere in the verse of Frenchmen; it is various, brilliant, and forcible. But he is, he says, at a loss to understand how a poet whose conception of the deity is so wise and noble could have selected for his hero a character so contemptible as Henri Quatre, who was not merely a Papist but a Papist "par lâche interest." He is angry that Voltaire should throughout the poem lean so decidedly to the side of Popery; he is still more angry that he should have placed on the same footing Popery and Protestantism, for the essence of Popery is intolerance, and the essence of Protestantism is enlightened toleration. "You arrived in our island," he goes on to say, "with a book against our religion, and we received you with open arms, our king and our queen presented you with money. I wonder," he adds, "how an Englishman who introduced himself to Cardinal Fleury with an attack on Popery would be likely to fare." He concludes by hoping that Voltaire will continue to reside in England, and he exhorts him to prepare "une nouvelle édition moins Papiste de la *Henriade*." This critique purported to be the work of an English nobleman. It was in reality the work of a French refugee named Faget. Voltaire was greatly amused at his being taken for a Catholic propagandist. "You will see," he writes in a letter to a friend in France, "by some annotations tacked to my book, and fathered upon an English lord, that I am here a confessor of Catholic religion." To this criticism he made no reply during his residence in England, but on it reappearing under another title in an edition of the *Henriade* printed at the Hague he answered it.

It was probably during his sojourn either in Maiden Lane or in Billiter Square that his adroitness and fluent mastery over our language saved him from what might otherwise have been an unpleasant adventure. He chanced one day to be strolling along the streets when his peculiar appearance attracted attention. A crowd collected, and some ribald fellow began with jeers and hoots to taunt him with his nationality. Nothing is so easily excited as the passions of a rabble, and the passions of a rabble, when their victim is defenceless, rarely exhaust themselves in words. The miscreants were already preparing to pelt him with mud, and mud would no doubt have been followed with missiles of a more formidable kind. But Voltaire was equal to the crisis. Boldly confronting his assailants, he mounted on a stone which happened to be at hand, and began an oration of which the first sen-

tence only has been preserved. "Brave Englishmen," he cried, "Am I not sufficiently unhappy in not having been born among you?" How he proceeded we know not, but his harangue was, if we are to believe Wagnière, so effective that the crowd was not merely appeased, but eager to carry him on their shoulders in triumph to his lodgings.* This was not the only occasion on which he experienced the rudeness with which the vulgar were in those days accustomed to treat his countrymen. He happened to be taking the air on the river when one of the men in charge of the boat, perceiving that his passenger was a Frenchman, began to boast of the superior privileges enjoyed by English subjects; he belonged, he said, not to a land of slaves but to a land of freemen. Warming with his theme, the fellow concluded his offensive remarks by exclaiming with an oath that he would rather be a boatman on the Thames than an Archbishop in France. The sequel of the story is amusing. Within a few hours the man had been seized by a press-gang, and next day Voltaire saw him at the window of a prison with his legs manacled and his hand stretched through the bars, craving alms. "What think you now of a French Archbishop?" he cried. "Ah, sir," replied the captive, "the abominable government have forced me away from my wife and children to serve in a king's ship, and have thrown me into prison and chained my feet for fear I should escape before the ship sails." A French gentleman who was with Voltaire at the time owned that he felt a malicious pleasure at seeing that the English, who were so fond of taunting their neighbours with servitude, were in truth quite as much slaves themselves. "But I," adds Voltaire in one of those noble reflections which so often flash across his pages, "felt a sentiment more humane: I was grieved to think that there was so little liberty on the earth." †

As soon as the *Henriade* was off his hands he applied himself steadily to his *History of Charles XII*. In the composition of this delightful biography, which he appears to have begun as early as 1727, he was greatly assisted by Von Fabricé. Few men then living knew more of the public and private life of the great Swede than Fabricé, and what he knew he liberally communicated. Much useful information was derived from Bolingbroke and the Dowager Duchess of Marlborough. But *Charles XII* was not the only work with which he was occupied. He began, prompted by Bolingbroke and inspired by Shakespeare, the tragedy of *Brutus*, the first act of which he sketched in English prose. We give a short specimen, which the reader may find it interesting to compare with the corresponding passage in the French text as it now stands. It is the speech of Brutus in the second scene of the first act:—

Brutus. Allege not ties: his (Tarquin's) crimes have broken them all. The gods themselves, whom he has offended, have declared against him. Which of ou

* Longchamp and Wagnière, vol. i. p. 23.

† See for the whole story his Letters to M——, *Œuvres Complètes* (Beuchot), vol. xxxviii. p. 22.

rights has he not trod upon? True, we have sworn to be his subjects, but we have not sworn to be his slaves. You say you've seen our Senate, in humble supplication, pay him their vows. Even he himself has sworn to be our father, and make the people happy in his guidance. Broken from his oaths, we are let loose from ours. Since he has transgressed our laws, his is the rebellion. Rome is free from guilt.

This tragedy, which he completed on his return to Paris, he dedicated to Bolingbroke. Mr. Parton in his list of Voltaire's writings enters among them an edition of *Brutus* published in London in 1727. Of that edition after a laborious search we can find no trace. It was certainly unknown to Desnoiresterres, to Beuchot, and to all the editors; and—what is, we think, final—there is no mention of it in the exhaustive bibliography of Voltaire just published by M. Georges Bengesco.* Mr. Parton has, we suspect, been misled by an ambiguous paragraph at the end of the preface to the fourth edition of the *Essay on Epic Poetry*. At Wandsworth, or possibly in London, he sketched also another tragedy, a tragedy which was not, however, completed till 1734. This was *La Mort de César*, suggested, as we need scarcely say, by the masterpiece of Shakespeare.† But the indefatigable energy of Voltaire did not exhaust itself in study and composition. It appears, from Duvernet, that he attempted to open a permanent French theatre in London, and with this object he induced a company of Parisian actors to come over; but the project met with so little encouragement that he was forced to abandon it, and the company went back almost immediately to Paris.

In the midst of these multifarious pursuits he had found time to peruse almost everything of note both in our poetry and in our prose. He began with Shakespeare, whose principal dramas he studied with minute attention, analysing the structure, the characterisation, the diction. His criticisms on Shakespeare are, it is true, seldom cited except to be laughed at, but the defects of these criticisms originated neither from ignorance nor from inattention. His real opinion of Shakespeare is not to be gathered from the *Des Théâtres Anglais* and from the *Lettres à l'Académie*, but from the *Lettres Philosophiques* and from the admirable letter to Horace Walpole. The influence of Shakespeare on Voltaire's own tragedies is very perceptible, and the extent of that influence will be at once apparent if we compare the plays produced before his visit to England with the plays produced on his return to France, if we compare *Ceïpe*, *Artémise*, and *Mariamne*, with *Brutus*, *Eryphile*, and *Zaire*. *Brutus* and *La Mort de César* flowed not more certainly from *Julius Cæsar* than *Zaire* from *Othello*; while reminiscences of *Hamlet* are unmistakable both in *Eryphile* and in *Sémiramis*. The first three acts of *Julius Cæsar* he subsequently translated into French, and he has in the *Lettres Philosophiques* given an admirable

* We take this opportunity to direct the attention of all students of Voltaire to this invaluable contribution to Voltairian literature.

† See *Œuvres Complètes* (edit. 1877), vol. ii. note.

version of the famous soliloquy in *Hamlet*. Milton he studied, as his *Essay on Epic Poetry* proves, with similar diligence. He had, in addition to *Paradise Lost*, read *Paradise Regained* and *Samson Agonistes*, neither of which he thought of much value. He was well acquainted with the poems, the dramas, and the essays of Dryden, and with the writings of Dryden's contemporaries. Even such inferior poets as Oldham, Roscommon, Dorset, Sheffield, Halifax, and Rochester had not escaped his curious eye. Rochester, indeed, he pronounced to be a poet of great genius; he places his satires on a level with those of Boileau, and in one of the *Philosophical Letters* (the twenty-first) he turns a portion of the satire on Man into French heroics. With the poems of Denham he was greatly pleased; and of Waller, whose *Elegy on the Death of Cromwell* he has translated into French verse, he speaks in terms of enthusiastic admiration, ranking him above Voiture, and justly observing that "his serious compositions exhibit a strength and vigour which could not have been expected from the softness and fluency of his other pieces." He read Otway, he was acquainted with Lee, and he enjoyed the comedies of Wycherley, Vanburgh, and Congreve, on which he has left many just and interesting observations. But nothing illustrates his mastery over our language, and his power of entering into the spirit of our literature, even when that literature is most esoteric, so strikingly as his remarks on *Hudibras*. "I never found," he says, "so much wit in any single book as that. It is *Don Quixote* and the *Satire Ménippée* blended together." Of the opening lines he has, in the *Lettres Philosophiques*, given a French version, reproducing with extraordinary felicity both the metre and the spirit. With not less pleasure he perused the poems of Prior. In the *Philosophical Dictionary* he devotes an article to him, and in another article he pauses to draw attention to the merits of *Alma*. With the essays and poems of Addison, whom he pronounces to be the best critic as well as the best writer of his age, he was well acquainted. His *Allegories* he has imitated; * from his criticism on Milton he has borrowed; and his *Cato* he placed at the head of English tragedies. Indeed, he has gone so far as to say that the principal character in that drama is the "greatest that was ever brought upon any stage." His observations upon the defects of the play are less open to question, and prove that if he had the bad taste to prefer Addison to Shakespeare, he was sufficiently acquainted with the history of our drama to be able to point out in what way the appearance of *Cato* marked an era in its development. To the genius of Swift he paid enthusiastic homage. He owed, he said, to Swift's writings the love he bore to the English language. He considered him immeasurably superior to Rabelais; and he was so delighted with *Gulliver's Travels* that he encouraged his friend Thiériot to undertake a translation of them into French, judiciously advising him, however, to confine his efforts to the first part. His own *Micromégas*

* See particularly the Vision in section ii. of the article on "Religion" in the *Philosophical Dictionary*.

is largely indebted to *Gulliver*. Nor did his nice and discriminating appreciation end here. Voltaire was the first critic who drew attention to the peculiar merits of Swift's verses.*

With the poems and tragedies of Thomson he was, as a very interesting letter to George, Lord Lyttleton, shows,† thoroughly conversant. "I was acquainted," so runs the letter, which is written in English and is dated Paris, May 17, 1750 (N.S.), "with Mr. Thomson when I stayed in England. I discovered in him a great genius and a great simplicity. I liked in him the poet and the true philosopher, I mean the lover of mankind. I think that without a good stock of such a philosophy a poet is just above a fiddler who amuses our ears and cannot go to our soul. I am not surprised your nation has done more justice to Mr. Thomson's *Seasons* than to his dramatic performances." As this letter has never, we believe, been printed, and as it is an interesting specimen of Voltaire's composition nearly twenty years after he had left us, our readers may perhaps like to see more of it. We will, therefore, transcribe a few paragraphs. He is accounting for the comparative indifference with which the English public regarded Thomson's tragedies.

There is one kind of poetry of which the judicious readers and the men of taste are the proper judges. There is another kind, that depends on the vulgar great or small; tragedy and comedy are of these last species; they must be suited to the turn of mind and proportioned to their taste. Your nation two hundred years since is used to a wild scene, to a crowd of tumultuous events, to an emphatical poetry mixed with low and comical expressions, to a lively representation of bloody deeds, to a kind of horror which seems often barbarous and childish, all faults which never sullied the Greek, the Roman, and the French stage. And give me leave to say that the taste of your politest countrymen differs not much in point of tragedy from the taste of the mob at bear gardens. 'Tis true we have too much of action, and the perfection of this art should consist in a due mixture of the French taste and the English energy. . . . Mr. Thomson's tragedies seem to me wisely intricated and elegantly writ. They want perhaps some fire, and it may be that his heroes are neither moving nor busy enough, but taking him all in all, methinks he has the highest claims to the greatest esteem.

But to return from our digression. The poetry of Pope he read and re-read with an admiration which occasionally expresses itself in hyperbole. The *Essay on Criticism* he preferred both to the masterpiece of Horace and to the *Art Poétique* of Boileau; the *Rape of the Lock* he considered the best mock heroic poem in existence; and the *Essay on Man*, which appeared about five years after he had returned to France, he describes as "the most beautiful didactic poem—the most useful—the most sublime—that has ever been written in any language."

It would be interesting to trace the influence of Pope's poetry upon his own. We can here only pause to point out that the *Temple du Goût*

* *Lettres Philosophiques*, xxii.

† This letter is among the archives at Hagley, and we are indebted for a copy of it to the courtesy and kindness of Lord Lyttleton.

was undoubtedly suggested by the *Dunciad*, that the *Le Désastre de Lisbonne* bears the impress of the *Essay on Man*, and the *Discours en vers sur L'Homme*. Into the question of his relations with Bolingbroke we cannot enter here. To the conversation and writings of that most brilliant but shallow and inaccurate philosopher he owed, we believe, more than he owed to any other single man in Europe.

At the beginning of 1729 he prepared to quit England for his native country. As far back as July 1727 he had obtained permission to visit Paris for three months; of that permission he had not availed himself, in consequence, no doubt, of his numerous engagements in London. There was now nothing to detain him. He had published the *Henriade*; he had completed his collections for the *Lettres Philosophiques*; he had collected materials for the *Siècle de Louis XIV.*, and for the *History of Charles XII.*; he had made what friends he cared to make; he had seen all he wished to see; and, what was of equal importance to him, he had made money. But it must be doing him great injustice to suppose that the only ties which bound him to England were ties of self-interest. He had become sincerely attached to the country and to the people. "Had I not been obliged," he said in a letter to Thiériot, "to look after my affairs in France, depend upon it I would have spent the rest of my days in London." The kindness and hospitality which he received he never forgot, and he took every opportunity of repaying it. To be an Englishman was always a certain passport to his courteous consideration. When in 1776 Martin Sherlock visited him at Ferney he found the old man, then in his eighty-third year, still full of his visit to England. He had had the garden laid out in the English fashion: the books with which he was surrounded were the English classics, the subject to which he persistently directed the conversation was the English nation. His departure from England is said to have been hastened by a quarrel with his bookseller Prévost; and a story was afterwards circulated by Desfontaines, that, previous to his departure, he was severely cudgelled by an infuriated member of the trade—for what reason, and under what circumstances, is not recorded.* However this may be, it seems clear that he had either done or said something which had made him enemies: there was certainly an impression in the minds of some that he quitted England under a cloud. This we gather from a passage in the *Gentleman's Magazine* for May 1732 which we transcribe: "Mr. Voltaire enriched himself with our contributions and behaved so ill that he was refused admittance into those noblemen's and gentlemen's families in which he had been received with great favour and distinction. He left England full of resentment, and wrote the King of Sweden's Life to abuse this nation and the Hanoverian family." The latter statement is, as we need scarcely say, quite untrue: the former statement is as plainly a gross exaggeration. Before

* See Desnoiresterre, *La Jeunesse de Voltaire*, p. 397.

setting out he went down to Twickenham, to have a final interview with Pope. "I am come," he said "to bid farewell to a man who never treated me seriously from the first hour of my acquaintance with him to the present moment." To this, Pope—who as soon as Voltaire's back was turned acknowledged the justice of the remark—probably replied with evasive politeness, or with an emphatic assurance to the contrary; for it is certain that in none of Voltaire's subsequent writings are there any indications either of unfriendliness or ill-will towards him. And it is equally certain that, had he quitted Pope under the impression that he had been ill-treated by him, his vengeance would have been sure, prompt, and signal.*

The exact date of Voltaire's departure from England we have not been able to discover. We may, however, conjecture with some certainty that it took place either at the end of February or in the beginning of March 1728-29, and our reasons for believing so are these: In a letter to Thiériot, undated, but apparently written about January of 1729 (N.S.), he says that he hopes to be in Paris about the fifteenth of March. From another letter dated March 10 (Feb. 27, O.S.) we infer that he was still in England. But in a letter dated March 2 (N.S.) we find him at St. Germain en Laye; apparently showing that he must have left England between the 27th of Feb. and the first of March 1729 (N.S.). The time, therefore, spent by Voltaire in England was, deducting a month for his short visit to France in the summer of 1727, about two years and nine months, and not, as Carlyle and others erroneously assert, two years.

J. C. C.

* The authority for this is Owen Ruffhead (*Life of Pope*, p. 165), who almost certainly had the anecdote, which was communicated by Pope himself, from Warburton.

Star unto Star.

WHEN, nearly twenty years ago, Drs. Huggins and Miller published the first results obtained from the spectroscopic study of stars, few could have supposed that a line of research so difficult and delicate would lead to the bold and startling views of the star depths which now seem opening out before us. Still less would it have been thought that the method of research would be so modified that the observations belonging to it could be pursued without the direct personal study of the stellar spectra which had been found so difficult and even (where exact researches were in question) so painful. In 1864 the observer who wished to determine whether a special substance existed in the vaporous atmosphere of a star, had to compare the spectrum of the star directly with the spectrum of the substance. In other words, he had first to turn his telescope upon the star with such precision that the image of the star should fall on the fine slit of the spectroscope (and be kept there by clock motion, driving the telescope throughout the operation), and the light of the star being then sifted out by the action of the prisms in the spectroscope, so as to form a rainbow-tinted streak or spectrum crossed by dark lines where certain tints are missing (on account of special absorptive action in the vaporous atmosphere of the star), the observer had to bring into the same field of view, and into precisely corresponding position, by the action of the same spectroscope, the bright line spectrum of whatever substance he wished to deal with. If the bright lines forming the spectrum of magnesium, or sodium, or calcium, or the like, were found to correspond exactly with dark lines or missing tints in the spectrum of the star, then the observer would know that the particular substance giving those bright lines (or more correctly shining with those tints) existed in the atmosphere of the star. But he might very well be in doubt as to the precise accuracy of the coincidences (on which everything depends), or he might not be able to perceive clearly, yet might suspect the existence of one or other of the dark lines necessary to complete the evidence. To make sure he must cause the electric spark producing the spectrum of the substance he is dealing with to flash again and again out of the darkness, wearying the eye by the constant alternation of darkness with bright light. Not a few minutes, but many hours, or even several observing nights, would be required for each observation of the sort; and later, some other observer, with different visual powers, or with instruments of greater or less precision, might throw doubt on the accuracy of the observation, and the whole work might have to be repeated.

Now, all this is changed. A photographic record of the spectrum is taken (hitherto only of the blue, violet, and ultra-violet part, but before long the whole visible spectrum, and parts invisible beyond the red and violet, will doubtless be photographed), and, either at the same time or under precisely the same optical conditions, a photograph of the sun's spectrum (not taken directly from the sun, but either from the twilight sky or from a planet like Venus which reflects pure sunlight): and then the known dark lines in the solar spectrum can be compared directly with the dark lines in the spectrum of the star. If doubt be afterwards thrown on the result, the slips with the recorded photographic spectra are always available for comparison. And thus star after star can be added to the list of those whose light-record of their vaporous structure has been obtained. Fainter and fainter stars can be dealt with as the sensitive plates are made more delicate, or as the accuracy of the clock-driving of telescopes is increased, until the photographic plate may be exposed during the whole of any clear night to receive the light impressions from a star. Already Dr. Draper has obtained records of the spectra of stars of the tenth magnitude—that is, far beyond the range of ordinary vision—though as yet such records of faint stars have not been available for the kind of research we are considering. In fact, they have only been received accidentally, so to speak, when search was being made for something entirely different.

We are not, however, here concerned to consider at any length the methods employed. It is interesting, and will appear more so as we proceed, to note how widely the research we are considering is likely to be extended in the future. But at present we propose chiefly to discuss the most remarkable result which has rewarded the method of spectroscopic inquiry into the stars, whether by ordinary vision or by the use of photographic appliances.

The result to which we refer is the marshalling of the stars into orders, different in colour, which spectroscopic analysis shows to be due to difference in present physical constitution, which again analogical reasoning shows to be due to difference in age.

Take first the bluish-white stars of which Sirius, Vega, Altair, and others are typical.

In the first place, we note that the only star of this order whose distance has been even roughly determined (Alpha Centauri in the southern hemisphere is a yellowish-white star) is demonstrably a much larger orb than our own sun, if the quantity of light which a sun emits is any indication of size. Sirius is so remote that the motion of the earth in her vast orbit, 185 million miles in diameter, scarcely at all affects the apparent position of that brilliant star. Very exact and careful study of the star indicates apparent motion (due to the earth's real motion) in a tiny ellipse, the larger axis of which is roughly about the 4,000th part of the moon's apparent diameter—the nature of the observation being such that this larger axis *may* be as much as the

3,000th or as little as the 5,000th part of the moon's apparent diameter, or even lie outside those limits. Taking the mean of the best measurements, a distance is inferred so great that our sun's light, were he placed at that distance, would be reduced to about the 50th part of the apparent lustre of a leading first-magnitude star, or, roughly, to about the 200th part of the lustre of Sirius. Hence it would follow that if an average square mile of the surface of Sirius emits as much light as an average square mile of the sun's surface, the surface of Sirius must be 200 times as large as the surface of our sun. If so, the diameter of Sirius would be about 14 times the diameter of the sun (for 14 times 14 are 196), and his volume about 2,800 times, or in round numbers 3,000 times the volume of the sun. We can hardly suppose that his volume, or probably his mass, is less than a thousand times larger than the sun's.

Of other stars of the bluish-white order we know less, with precision, but we do know so much as this, that all the brighter ones *must* be, and therefore even the fainter ones *probably* are, very much larger than the sun. For though the actual distance of Vega and Altair, for example, cannot be determined, it is because they are so far away that attempts at measurement fail. If either of them were as near as Sirius, its distance would be as readily determinable. But the measures which, applied to Sirius, give a recognisable result, fail utterly when applied to Vega and Altair. It is true, results are published in our books of astronomy which if accepted would indicate a measured distance in the case of Vega, but it is utterly untrustworthy. Vega and Altair lie beyond the range of the best methods of measurement yet invented. But noting that their lustre still exceeds many times that which the sun would have if removed to the distance of Sirius, we infer safely that the lustre of these two bluish-white stars exceeds in yet greater degree that which our sun would have if removed to their distance: in what precise degree we cannot determine, but we may confidently say that these stars are very much larger than our own sun. The same argument applies to all the brighter stars of the bluish-white kind. And having thus inferred that so many stars of this colour exceed our sun in size, it is a highly probable inference that all do (the fainter being simply very much farther away), *if* it shall appear that all the stars of this kind possess certain physical characteristics which stars of other colours do not possess. For if it is a fair inference that because all bluish-white stars yet examined possess such characteristics, so will others of the same colour which may hereafter be examined; and again, that because no other stars have yet been found to possess these characteristics but stars of a bluish-white colour, therefore others which may hereafter be found to possess them will also be of this colour; it is clearly as fair an inference to assume that the great size characterising all the stars of this kind yet tested or testable in this respect is a characteristic also of the class.

Now it appears from direct spectroscopic study of these stars, as well as from their spectra, that they differ in physical structure in marked

manner and degree from our sun. The lines which indicate the presence of relatively cool hydrogen—hydrogen exerting an absorptive action on the light from the central glowing mass—in these stars, are always much stronger and broader than in the spectrum of our sun. I do not dwell here on a question which has arisen as to a certain line which appears to be common both to calcium and hydrogen, and has therefore given rise to certain discussions (running, in my opinion, far in advance of the evidence) as to the identity of some element common to both calcium and hydrogen, which of course, according to that view, would neither of them be elements. I prefer now to consider only the broad lines of distinction between the various orders of stars, and not to discuss *minutiae* which may hereafter very probably be shown to be altogether without significance.*

Now the great breadth and strength of the hydrogen lines in these monstrous suns (suns exceeding our sun much as our sun exceeds Jupiter and Saturn, and as these planets exceed our earth, Venus, and Mars) may be taken safely enough to indicate the existence of much deeper and denser atmospheres of relatively cool hydrogen around those suns than exist around our own. Yet the intense brightness and whiteness of those suns serve to show that such deep envelopes of relatively cool hydrogen are by no means due to the longer continuance of a process of cooling. On the contrary, it seems clear that it is the greater intensity of the radiation of those parts of the stars' light which form the continuous background of the spectrum, and not the greater intensity of the absorptive action of the hydrogen, which really occasions these lines to appear broad and dark. The hydrogen itself, which, owing to the great lightness of this element under the same conditions of temperature and pressure, extends high above the other gaseous envelopes, forming the outer parts of these intensely bright white stars, is no doubt itself intensely hot. Most probably it is far hotter than those hydrogen layers which cause the finer absorptive lines of hydrogen in the spectrum of our own sun and his fellows. But so much more intense is the light radiated from the glowing mass within (mostly from glowing gas at great pressure, I think) that the absorptive lines of hydrogen appear by contrast very broad and very strong.

On this view we may fairly assume that the darkness of the hydrogen lines is a characteristic of stars at a much higher temperature than our sun and suns of his class. And finding this characteristic associated with some stars which are certainly of enormous size, and with other stars which *may* be thus exceptionally large, we are led to infer that this association is not accidental—that *all* stars having these very strong hydrogen lines are very much larger than our own sun.

* Just as Professor Young, by using spectroscopes of great dispersive power and showing lines to be diverse which with inferior instruments had seemed identical, has entirely destroyed the imagined validity of evidence on which certain very bold assumptions as to the elementary constitution of matter had been based.

Whether we can accept this inference or not will depend very much on whether we can regard the youth of a sun as in any way correlated with the sun's size. The reasoning which I have applied to planets—the justice of which reasoning seems confirmed by the accordance of the results to which it leads with observed facts—may be applied also to the stars. I have shown that if two planets of different size are at any given epoch in the same stage of planetary life—that is, at the same temperature—the smaller will presently pass into a more advanced stage than the larger will have attained to, because it will part with its heat at a relatively greater rate. Supposing, for instance, the diameter of the larger planet is twice as great as that of the smaller, and therefore the surface four times as great, and the volume (or mass, if the planets are of nearly the same density) eight times as great as that of the other, it is evident that as the quantity of heat is proportional to the quantity of matter, or eight times as great in the larger planet when the two are at the same temperature, while the rate of emission, being proportional to the surface, is but four times as great, the supply of heat in the larger will last twice as long as the smaller supply of heat in the smaller planet. Now, as I have said, this reasoning applies equally to the stars; and if we could only be assured that at any given time two stars of unequal size were in exactly the same stage of stellar life, we should be sure that at any much later stage the smaller star would be much more advanced in stellar life than the larger.

The difficulty arises here, however, that we have no means of proving, but on the contrary strong reason for doubting, whether the stars of our galaxy began their existence of stars at any common time. When we see the various orders of nebulous masses within the galaxy, and note how very different these nebulae seem to be as to condition, while the very existence of true nebulae (many of which we may regard as unformed suns or star clusters) indicates the great diversities of age existing among the occupants of stellar space, we perceive how very unsafe it would be to assume that the stars, simply because they are stars, began their existence as such all at the same or nearly the same time. The contrary is not only far more probable, but to all intents and purposes certain.

All we can safely assume is, that the greater size and mass of a star indicates the much longer continuance of all the stages of its career, past and to come—that it has been much longer in passing through the inchoate stage, and through its first stages as a formed sun, and that it will be very much longer in passing through all those stages which it has still to go through, than our own sun or other suns of the same class. Looking at such a sun as Sirius, for example, we may believe that at the beginning of its present stage of existence as a bluish-white sun, our sun and Sirius may have both been bluish-white, but that our sun, being very much smaller, has passed onwards into the stage when a star shines with yellowish-white lustre, and will perhaps pass onwards

to the later stages of which we have yet to speak, while Sirius and Vega are still shining as bluish-white stars. But we cannot assume that any small bluish-white star which gives (as many small stars do) the same sort of spectrum as Sirius, is in reality an enormously large sun, another Sirius in fact, shining with the same sort of light because, beginning its existence at about the same epoch, it has taken a much longer time than our sun to reach the same stage of sun life. It may be that a bluish-white star, with strong hydrogen lines in its spectrum, is no larger than our sun, or is even smaller than he is; but having come into existence as a sun much later, has not reached the same stage of development.

It is important that we should not here fall into an error of the same sort as that which vitiated the earlier reasonings of Sir William Herschel respecting the stellar distances. He regarded the brightness of a star as fairly indicating its distance, assuming all stars to be of the same general order; later we see a tendency on his part to fall into the opposite extreme, and regard brightness as rather indicating the real size of a star than proximity. Neither inference can in point of fact be relied upon; some faint stars are large ones very far off; others are really small stars not farther off, or even nearer, than their fellows.

So it is in the case before us. Some bluish-white suns with spectra indicative of stellar youth are no doubt enormously large orbs, compared with which our sun is little more than as a dwarf compared with a giant; such suns are young because they are large; the stages of their lives are all very much shorter than the corresponding stages of the lives of our sun. But others no doubt of these young suns are really young in years as well as in development; they are younger than our sun, not because they require longer time intervals for the various stages of their life, but because they began their stellar life later.

It should be noticed that the spectra of these bluish-white stars are not all exactly alike. They are distinguished from each other by the greater or less breadth and diffuseness of the lines of hydrogen, and also by various degrees of strength and visibility of the finer lines. It may possibly be that hereafter, in such distinctions as these, we may be able to recognise evidence as to the size of a star—that, for instance, a large star in passing through the first stage of stellar life may present characteristics always different in certain respects from those presented by smaller orbs in passing through the same stage. If so, we shall have a new means of dealing with the architecture of the heavens; for, knowing something of the real size of a star in this way, we may infer its distance from its apparent size, and thus place it correctly in position in space, instead of knowing only the direction in which it lies, at some distance unknown.

Pass now to the next order of suns, of which Aldebaran, Capella, and our own sun are examples. "In the spectrum of Aldebaran," says Dr. Huggins, "the lines of hydrogen are reduced to about the proportion

they possess in the solar spectrum ; the other lines of the spectrum are no longer fine and difficult to see ; we have in full the triple line of magnesium." I have seen the spectrum of Capella as photographed by Professor Henry Draper of New York, for comparison with the spectrum of the sun, as received after reflexion from the surface of Jupiter. Matters were so arranged that the two spectra were of the same strength. Now when these photographs were placed side by side (the corresponding dark lines being brought into the same direction, so that the eye could run along a dark line of Capella into the corresponding dark line of the sun) I found it almost impossible to recognise the slightest difference between the two spectra. Almost every line in the spectrum of Capella corresponded with a dark line in the spectrum of the sun ; in each case the strength of the lines corresponded very closely. Only after a prolonged and close scrutiny could I satisfy myself that one or two lines of the solar spectrum seemed slightly stronger than the corresponding lines in the spectrum of Capella, and in these cases I found that these very lines are known to be slightly strengthened by absorptive action experienced as they pass through the atmosphere of Jupiter. In this case, apart from a slight disturbing influence due to this absorptive action, a comparison was made between our sun and Capella, precisely as from a world travelling round a sun equidistant from these two orbs. The practical identity of the two spectra is the best proof yet afforded of the oneness of constitution (with infinite variety of distribution) throughout our galaxy.

Again, however, we find ourselves confronted by a difficulty akin to that already experienced in dealing with the question of the relative dimensions of the bluish-white stars. Only that, whereas in their case we could only recognise the extreme probability that many stars of that order differ largely in size from Sirius and Vega, we have in the case of stars of the second order not only probable inference of this sort, but proof positive that two at least among the stars of the second order differ exceedingly in size from our own sun.

For although we do not know the actual distance of either Capella or Aldebaran (I disregard utterly all the measurements of Capella's distance which are given in our books of astronomy, or rather I regard these as proving conclusively that Capella lies utterly beyond the range of measurement*), we do know certainly that our sun placed at the

* It is singular that any faith should be placed by professional astronomers in measurements so manifestly untrustworthy as those which have been given in the case of stars like Capella, Polaris, and Arcturus. When we remember that the star 61 Cygni, which comes next in distance—*probably*—to Alpha Centauri, was first set by the careful measurements of Bessel some three times as far away, and then brought by the equally careful and refined measurements of Peters to only twice the distance of Alpha Centauri—a correction of twenty millions of miles, or more than three years' light journey—we see how utterly unreliable must be estimates like those (due to Peters) which set Arcturus about eight times, Polaris about fourteen times, and Capella about twenty-one times as far away as Alpha Centauri. The error in

distance of either of these stars would shine with very much less light than either of them. We know that, set beside Alpha Centauri, he would shine with about a third part of the light of that star. Now, Capella shines with almost exactly half the light of Alpha Centauri, and Aldebaran with about three-sevenths. Thus our sun set at the distance of Alpha Centauri would shine with about two-thirds the lustre of Capella, and about seven-ninths the lustre of Aldebaran. But each of these stars is at least five times farther away than Alpha Centauri, or otherwise the persistent efforts made to determine the distance of each must long ere this have been rewarded with more success than astronomers have hitherto attained in this direction. Thus each would look at least twenty-five times as bright as it actually does if removed from its present distance to that of Alpha Centauri. Therefore Capella may fairly be assumed to give about forty times (roughly) as much light as our sun at the same distance, and Aldebaran at least thirty times as much. But in the case of two stars whose spectra are very similar to the spectrum of our sun, we may fairly assume that (on the average) each square mile of surface gives out about the same quantity of light as (on the average) each square mile of the surface of the sun. It would follow on this assumption, which is not a very bold one, that the surface of Capella is about forty times as large as the surface of the sun, and the surface of Aldebaran about thirty times as large—say, for convenience of calculation, thirty-six instead of forty in the former case, and twenty-five instead of thirty in the latter. Then it would follow that the diameter of Capella is six times as great, that of Aldebaran five times as great, as the diameter of our sun. Hence the volume of Capella would be (216 times) more than 200 times, and the volume of Aldebaran (125 times) more than 100 times our sun's. Of course the calculation is very rough, and a great deal is assumed. Albeit nearly all the assumptions have been such as rather to diminish than to increase our estimate of the size of these seemingly giant suns of our own sun's order. It is certain Capella and Aldebaran are at least five times farther away than the sun—they may be very much farther away even than that. There is no room for doubt about the photometric measurements by which the relative brightness of the sun, Capella, and Aldebaran, at the same distance, has been determined. It may perhaps be doubtful whether the intrinsic brightness of the surface of our sun is so nearly the same as that of the surfaces of Capella and Aldebaran as to leave the estimate

the determination of the annual displacement of 61 Cygni was fully one-sixth the annual displacement of the nearest star in the heavens—Alpha Centauri—the only star in my opinion whose distance has been fairly, though roughly, measured. Of what use, then, to give us the annual displacements of the three stars named, when even that assigned to Arcturus is only the eighth of that nearest star's—that is, the whole displacement which Peters claimed to have observed in the case of that star is only three-fourths of the *discrepancy* between his result and Bessel's in the case of another star?

we have formed appreciably unaffected by whatever correction may be due to this cause; but be it noticed that we have already made a correction, since we have reduced the estimate of Capella's surface from forty to thirty-six times, and that of Aldebaran's from thirty to twenty-five times, that of the sun's surface.

Now, if Capella really has a diameter six times greater than the sun's, every stage in the cooling of Capella—that is, every stage of this star's life—would probably last about six times as long as the corresponding stage in the lifetime of our sun. For the volume being on this assumption 216 times as great, it would be in that degree that the quantity of heat in Capella, at any the same stage of its existence, would exceed the quantity of heat in the sun, whether we consider actual or potential heat arising from the contraction due to gravity. The heat would pass away from a surface only 36 times greater, that is, not 216 times as fast (which would make the supply last just as long, but at one-sixth that rate); therefore the supply would last about six times as long. In the case of Aldebaran the supply for each stage of star-cooling would last about five times as long. These numbers are, of course, very far from exactness; but they suffice to show that the lifetime of one star of a given class or order may exceed very much in duration that of another star of the same kind.

We come next to the stars or suns of the third order, whose light, instead of being bluish-white like that of Sirius or Vega, or yellowish-white like that of Capella or of our sun, is of an orange-yellow tint. The best representative of this class of sun is Arcturus, whose spectrum is somewhat like that of our own sun, but presents characteristic peculiarities, which the late Father Secchi regarded as corresponding to what we might expect in a sun like ours at a time when a great number of spots were present on its surface. If we adopt this opinion, we should regard Arcturus as a permanently spotted sun. Dr. Huggins merely remarks of Arcturus that it is a star of another order, which includes the solar type, but the star seems to be removed farther than the sun is in the order of change from the typical form as we meet it in Vega and Sirius. Here the typical lines are no longer present as a strong group. The line which has been regarded as belonging to both calcium and hydrogen is stronger, relatively, than in the solar spectrum. The spectrum of this star is crowded with fine lines, and in the visible part resembles the solar spectrum, but in the ultra-violet part, which hitherto alone photography has recorded, the lines are more intense than in the solar spectrum, and are differently grouped.

The inference from the observed peculiarities of the spectrum of the star Arcturus is that this is a sun further advanced in sun-life than our own.

Now, here again the question as to size is answered in a way suggesting that there is no present correlation between the size of a star and its age or state of development. So far as size is concerned,

Arcturus, if it had begun its existence as a sun at the same time as our own sun, should have been much less advanced than he is. For Arcturus is half as bright again as Capella, yet lies at least as far away as that distance which we have assigned as the least possible distance for Capella. Therefore all that we have said about Capella and Aldebaran applies with increased force to Arcturus. His surface is probably at least sixty or seventy times as large as the sun's, even if we assume that the intrinsic brightness of the surface of this older star is equal to that of our sun's surface; but it is probably less, in which case to account for the great *amount* of light emitted by Arcturus we must assume the surface to be greater in proportion as its intrinsic brilliancy is less. Even with a surface only sixty-four times as great as the sun's, Arcturus would have a diameter exceeding his eight times, and a volume exceeding his nearly five hundred times. Arcturus would therefore be a sun marvellously surpassing our own in volume, and presumably in mass also. We may infer, reasonably enough, that the family of worlds over which this mighty orb bears sway surpasses in like degree in dignity and importance that ruled over by our own sun.

In passing, let it be noticed that all these considerations as to the great size of many, if not most, of the stars of the first order (the bluish-white suns), of some at any rate of the stars of the second order (the yellowish-white suns), and of one at least of the stars of the third order (the orange-yellow suns) are enormously, one may say overwhelmingly, strengthened, if we accept Dr. Siemens' view of the exhaustion of each sun's rays as they do their work in space. For in that case all the stars must emit very much more light than we have been assuming that they do. In fact, if that theory were true, the mere visibility of a star at the distance of Sirius would imply that the sun so seen across depths of space exceeding at least a million times the entire span of the earth's orbit, was an orb compared with which our sun is less than the tiniest meteor compared with the mighty mass of our earth. For our own sun, if he does anything like the work assigned him by Dr. Siemens, must exhaust all his light-giving as well as heat-giving energies long before he can extend the news of his existence as a sun even to the distance of the nearest star. Yet *there* in the star depths are ten thousand suns which do much more than merely make themselves visible athwart such distances, some of them even giving hundreds of times as much light as our sun would give if—without any such exhaustion of his rays in space—he shone from beyond such distances as separate those orbs from us.

But apart from all such questions as these, there is to me something most impressive in the thought of what, as thus interpreted by spectrum analysis, the heavens reveal to us. Of old it was known that one star differs from another in glory—meaning perhaps in brightness only. In colour, too, it had been seen that the stars are unlike. But who would have ventured to surmise that in real size the suns that people space are so unlike? Who could have supposed that any instruments men

could devise would enable us to judge which are the younger, which the older stars? Yet even the most cautious among our astronomical physicists, Dr. Huggins, the ablest of our spectroscopists, accepts this as the only reasonable solution of the observed differences in star spectra. "We cannot resist," he says, "the feeling that in Arcturus" (and the other stars of that class) "we have to do with a star which has departed farther from the condition in which Vega now is than our sun has yet done. The question presents itself, Have we before us stars of permanently different orders, or have we to do with some of the life-changes through which all stars pass? Does the sun's position, somewhere before Arcturus in the order of change, indicate also his relative age? On these points we know nothing certainly." "If I may give some play to the scientific use of the imagination," he added, addressing his audience at the Royal Institution, "I would ask you to imagine an inhabitant from some remote part of the universe, seeing for the first time an old man with white hair and wrinkled brow, to ask, 'Was he born thus?' The answer would be, 'No; in this child, this youth, this man of mature age, you see some of the life-changes through which the old man has passed.' So, giving play to the scientific imagination, there may have been a time when a photograph of the solar spectrum would have presented the typical lines only which are still in Vega. At a subsequent period these would have been narrower and more defined, and other lines would have made their appearance. And if we allow this scientific imagination to project these Royal Institution Friday evenings into the far future, the lecturer, clad it may be in the skin of a white bear, may have to describe how the spectrum of the then feeble sun has already passed into the class of spectra distinguishing those stars which shine with red light."

It is evident that our great astronomical physicist recognises no perpetual energy in suns, even in the mightiest. He sees them passing downwards along the scale of stellar being, gradually parting with more and more of their stored-up energies, not recruiting themselves with their own energies stored up after doing their full work! And in this, with all respect to an eminent practical physicist, he shows himself more philosophical as well as more practical. He recognises that the same law which affects the small and the short-lived, the large and the long-lived must also submit to. Practically eternal though to our conceptions the duration of each stage of a sun's life may be, each such stage is nevertheless finite, even though a sun exceed our own a million times in volume or in mass. The heavens present to us a scene of tremendous—nay, of inconceivable energy. Suns upon suns, to millions, to tens of millions, to hundreds, even to thousands of millions, occupy space around us. In every stage of stellar life they are at work, illumining, heating, and guiding the systems which circle around them. Beyond the limits of the most powerful telescope lie thousands of millions more, repeating the same story of seemingly infinite energy, seemingly endless

duration. Yet each one of those orbs, and therefore the sum of all, or the universe as we know it, tends to an end—an end which may be, however, but the beginning of new forms of existence, while the gaseous nebulae, now mere masses of vapour, may then have entered on sun-life, to carry on the same story, to teach the same lesson, that though each order of created things tends onwards to an end, yet to such orders we can trace no visible limit—"End is there none to the universe of God; lo, also, there is no beginning."

R. A. P.

In 1782; Political and Social.

JUST a century ago England was in the midst of one of the most tremendous and widely extended contests which a nation has ever successfully sustained. In the year 1776 the Congress had declared the American colonies free and independent States; the first action between the King's troops and the colonists having taken place at Lexington in the preceding year. France had concluded a treaty with the Americans, and acknowledged their independence on February 6, 1778. The Spaniards had joined the cause of America in July 1779; and the British Government had declared war against the Dutch on December 2, 1780. On October 15, 1777, General Burgoyne and 3,500 men had surrendered to General Gates. On October 9, 1781, the British army, commanded by Earl Cornwallis, after two considerable victories over the Americans, had surrendered by capitulation to General Washington. On July 27, 1778, the French fleet under Chartres, and the English under Keppel, had met and engaged within sight of Brest. The action was indecisive; Admiral Keppel, however, was afterwards tried by court martial, but honourably acquitted. Islands and settlements in the West and East Indies were taken and retaken by the English and their opponents without much apparent loss or gain on either side. But in February 1782 came great disaster. Minorca surrendered to the Spaniards, and the West Indian islands of St. Christopher, Nevis, and Monserrat. It might have seemed that England was meeting defeat, but for the magnificent defence of Gibraltar under General Elliot, which was still continuing. And on April 12 Admiral Rodney gained a complete victory over the French in the West Indies, capturing the French Admiral De Grasse, with ten sail of the line; while two had been sunk in the engagement. In August occurred that very singular misfortune, the sinking of the *Royal George*, of 110 guns, off Spithead. The gallant Admiral Kempenfeldt perished, with 500 of the crew, and 200 women who were on board at the time. In causing the ship to heel over, to effect repairs, care was not taken to prevent her inclining too far. The water rushed in at the lower ports, and a magnificent ship, with its brave complement of men, was lost at a time when the nation could ill spare the loss. But it was little felt. Lord Howe fought the combined fleets of France and Spain, off Gibraltar, in October, and succeeded in conveying relief into the beleaguered fortress. In fact, no disaster could check the brilliant career of our navy at this period; twenty years before the noble courage and resources of Nelson placed it on the summit of its glory.

The Spaniards and French had commenced the siege of Gibraltar in July 1779. In the latter part of 1782 they made their grand attack, the garrison then consisting of about 7,000 English. In one night it is recorded that their floating batteries were destroyed by red-hot balls, and their whole line of works inland annihilated by a sortie under the command of General Elliot in person. The enemy's loss in munitions of war this night was estimated at upwards of 2,000,000*l*. Their army amounted to 40,000. Of these the Duke de Crillon commanded 12,000 of the best troops of France, and 1,000 pieces of artillery were brought to bear upon the fortress. For attacking from the seaward there were 47 sail of the line, all three-deckers, 10 great floating batteries, carrying altogether 212 guns, and esteemed invincible. Besides these there were innumerable frigates, bomb-ketches, and cutters, with gun and mortar boats. For weeks together 6,000 shells were daily thrown into the town. But the garrison stoutly held out; and on February 5, 1783, the blockade ceased.

On November 30, 1782, provisional articles of peace were signed at Paris between the British and American commissioners, by which England acknowledged the independence of America. Meanwhile, to compensate for this enormous loss to the British Crown, the East India Company was gradually winning for it the splendid appanage of India. In the year 1782 Warren Hastings was consolidating our power in Bengal, while Sir Eyre Coote was obtaining brilliant successes over Hyder Ali in the South.

This war, of about seven years' duration, had commenced by our attempting to coerce revolted colonists, and had ended in our having to engage France, Spain, and Holland, then all powerful. During its continuance our national efforts had been proportioned to the magnitude of the contest gradually forced upon us. In December 1778 we had embodied the militia for home defence, and between 1774 and 1783 we had largely increased our army. We find that noblemen and corporations of citizens were alike active in raising regiments. In 1774 our regular troops consisted of—1st, two troops of Horse Guards and two of Horse Grenadiers. The Horse Grenadiers were armed with musquets and bayonets. These four troops were converted in the year 1788 into the two regiments of Life Guards. In the year 1782 the Horse Guards were still composed of gentlemen troopers, ranking as ensigns in the army. 2nd, the Royal Regiment of Horse Guards. 3rd, four regiments of Horse, three of Dragoon Guards, and eighteen of Dragoons. 4th, three regiments of Foot Guards, divided into seven battalions, as at present. 5th, seventy regiments of Foot; of which the 1st Royals had two battalions. 6th, four battalions of artillery.

County titles were first bestowed upon the greater number of our regiments of infantry in 1782. In this year the regiments of dragoons had been increased to twenty-two, of which the 8th (King's Royal Irish), 12th (Prince of Wales'), 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 17th, 18th, 19th,

20th, and 21st were Light Dragoons; and the 7th, 9th, 10th, and 11th were made Light Dragoons in 1783. This demonstrates that the advantages of light cavalry were appreciated a century ago as highly as at present. The Heavy Dragoons at this period appear to have worn the scarlet, full-skirted coat, with the three-cornered cocked hat, high boots, and straight swords. The Light Dragoons had jackets of blue or scarlet, with white breeches and waistcoats, boots reaching to the knees, and helmets ornamented with horsehair crests. They were armed with curved swords and short carbines. The infantry in 1782 had been augmented to 105 regiments, with 26 companies of invalids to do duty in garrisons. With the exception of the Highlanders, they wore white waistcoats and breeches with their cut-away scarlet coats, cocked hats, and high black gaiters. The officers still carried spontoons—short pikes, with a sort of battleaxe head—in addition to their swords; and the sergeants were armed with halberts. The officers of the flank companies of regiments, and of Fusilier and Highland regiments, carried a light musquet called a fusil.

At about this time the costume of civilians had become much plainer than it had been only ten years before. Cloth had become the usual material for the coat, with black satin breeches. Top-boots and round hats were worn in the morning, with the hair undressed; but silk stockings and buckles, with three-cornered cocked hats, hair powder, and swords, were worn upon occasions of ceremony. But swords were not so generally worn in full dress as they had been ten years previously. Planché observes, in his *History of British Costume*, that about the year 1778 gold-laced hats had become fashionable again; because the press gangs were particularly busy in that year for the Royal Navy, and the gold lace was supposed to impart a military or distinguished air. The Peers still habitually wore their scarlet and ermined robes in the House of Lords. In the Commons, it was customary for the members of the Government to appear in full dress, with bag-wigs, buckles, and swords. Jesse observes that Charles James Fox and his party, who had been accustomed to dress in the *négligée* style which had come into vogue, created much amusement when they came into power in 1782, and appeared in the House in all the stiffness of the full dress.

This change of the Administration in 1782 caused considerable commotion in the world of politics. It is observed in the *Annual Register* of 1782, that "so complete and radical a change of those to whom the management of the affairs of the kingdom was entrusted, gave great satisfaction to a very large part of the nation, and afforded the most flattering hopes to those who had a sincere attachment to the interests of their country. So many men of distinguished abilities, and who professed such public-spirited principles, had never before been united in administration. They came into power, indeed, at a period when the nation was in a situation extremely calamitous, difficult, and dangerous; but, at all events, such a ministry, if they continued united, could not

but be productive of signal advantages to the nation." They immediately engaged in measures for securing a general peace; and it seems curious, in this year 1882, to read that the Empress of Russia offered her mediation to restore peace between Great Britain and Holland.

Important concessions were made to the Irish in this year. In chapter six of the *Annual Register* for 1782 it is observed that "We have seen, in the former volumes of our work, that the spirited exertions of the volunteer associations of Ireland had occasioned a just attention to be paid to the grievances of that kingdom; that some Liberal laws in favour of the Irish trade and commerce were passed by the Parliament of Great Britain; and that the people of Ireland, after having armed for the defence of their country against foreign enemies, wisely resolved to deliver themselves from domestic evils, from every species of ministerial oppression, and to obtain some important constitutional reformatoms. They even determined to assert the independency of their own Parliament, and to reject the claims of the British Parliament to bind Ireland."

In fact the pressure of the war upon the resources of England had been so great that the raising of volunteer corps had been permitted for the defence of Ireland. In 1782 these associations, as they were styled, numbered about 100,000 men, while there were only 5,000 British troops in Ireland. Emboldened, therefore, by this powerful array of Irish patriots, their Parliament spoke firmly. In April the obnoxious Poyning's Act was repealed, which had been in force since 1494. By this Act legislation in the Irish Parliament was restricted to measures which had been previously approved by the English Council.

In the midst of these wars and political anxieties, when the great American colony was slipping from our grasp, and when three powerful nations were threatening us, it might have been supposed that the social life of England would have exhibited traces of the national troubles. The Rev. Charles Moritz, of Berlin, has, however, left an account of travels through various parts of England in 1782, which may be found in the *British Tourists*, in six volumes, published in 1809. No one, in reading his narrative, would suspect that we were engaged in war upon any large scale. Neither anxiety nor distress is apparent. He disembarked at Dartford at the beginning of June. On landing he writes:—"We arrived at the first English village, where an uncommon neatness in the structure of the houses struck me with a pleasing surprise, especially when I compared them with the long, rambling, inconvenient, and singularly mean cottages of our peasants." "We breakfasted at Dartford. Here, for the first time, I saw an English soldier, in his red uniform, his hair cut short and combed back on his forehead, so as to afford a full view of his fine, broad, manly face. Here, too, I first saw (what I deemed a true English sight) two boys boxing in the street."

He then remarks upon the neatness of the post-chaises, and the ease and rapidity of their motion upon the firm, smooth roads; and says:—

“A thousand charming spots and beautiful landscapes, on which my eye could long have dwelt with rapture, were now rapidly passed with the speed of an arrow.” “We first descried London enveloped in a thick smoke or fog.” From Westminster Bridge he enjoys the prospect, and especially comments on the delightful terraces, planted with trees, on the left bank of the Thames, “and those new, tasteful buildings, called the Adelphi.” On the Thames itself, he observes, are countless swarms of little boats, many with one mast and one sail, and many with none, in which persons of all ranks are carried. Having obtained lodgings, for sixteen shillings a week, in George Street, York Buildings, he is taken by two Englishmen, with whom he has become acquainted, to dine at a neighbouring tavern or eating-house. Here, he says, we paid a shilling each for some roast meat and a salad, giving, at the same time, nearly half as much to the waiter ; and yet this is reckoned a cheap house and a cheap style of living. He brings his trunk from the ship in a hackney-coach, after having paid two shillings each to three officials to prevent its being taken to the Custom House. “When I came home,” he says, “my landlady kindly requested the coachman not to ask more than was just, as I was a foreigner ; whereupon the hackney-coach driver replied, “Nay, if he were not a foreigner, I should not overcharge him.”

It should be observed that he congratulates himself on his perfect acquaintance with the English language. He certainly bears remarkable testimony to the literary and general knowledge of the English people at that period. He states that this landlady was only a tailor's widow, but that her late husband had fallen in love with her on account of the very proper emphasis with which she read Milton. He continues :—“This single instance, perhaps, would prove but little ; but I have conversed with several people of the lowest class, who all knew their national authors, and who all had read many, if not all, of them. There is hardly any argument, or dispute in conversation, in the higher ranks, about which the lower cannot also converse, or give their opinion. And the quick sale of the national authors is here promoted also by cheap and convenient editions.”

He remarks that the footway, paved with large stones, on both sides of the street, appears to a foreigner extremely convenient and pleasant ; as one may walk there in perfect safety from the prodigious crowd of carts and coaches which fill the centre. Politeness requires that a lady, or any one to whom respect should be shown, should be allowed to pass on the side nearest the house or wall, not, as in Germany, always on the right. The existence of the war is seen in a curious statement concerning the pressing for the navy. He says that a foreigner has nothing to fear from being pressed as a sailor, unless he should be found at any suspicious place. “A singular invention, for this purpose of pressing, is a vessel placed on Tower Hill, furnished with masts and all the appurtenances of a ship. The persons attending this ship promise simple country people, who happen to be standing and staring at it, to show it

to them for a trifle ; and, as soon as they are in, they are secured as in a trap ; and, according to circumstances, made sailors of, or let go again." Of the numerous inscriptions over doors, indicating trades or occupations, he regrets that the most frequent are those announcing "spirituous liquors sold here." He finds that the Gordon riots of 1780 are still a general topic of conversation ; and he is informed that more people were found dead near empty brandy casks in the streets than were killed by the musket-balls of the military.

In indication of the general prosperity of the people, he writes :—" It gave me much real pleasure, when I walked from Charing Cross, up the Strand, past St. Paul's, to the Royal Exchange, to meet, in the thickest crowds, persons, from the highest to the lowest ranks, almost all well-looking people, and cleanly and neatly dressed. I rarely saw even a fellow with a wheelbarrow, who had not a shirt on ; nor even a beggar without both a shirt, and shoes and stockings. The English are certainly distinguished for cleanliness." He says that the fine wheaten bread, with excellent butter and Cheshire cheese, made amends for the scantiness of his dinner. To a person in his situation, he says, an English dinner generally consists of a piece of half-boiled or half-roasted meat, and a few cabbage leaves boiled in plain water, on which they pour a sauce made of flour and butter, the usual method of dressing vegetables in England. "The slices of bread and butter which they give you with their tea are as thin as poppy-leaves. But there is another kind of bread and butter, usually eaten with tea, which is toasted by the fire and is incomparably good. This is called toast." He visits Vauxhall Gardens, and conceives that they are suggestive of the Berlin Vauxhall. He relates that he supped in one of the small boxes at the side of the orchestra, with the Secretary of the Prussian Ambassador, and other gentlemen from Berlin. The beauty of the groves in the gardens, and the magnificence of the Rotunda, with its brilliant chandeliers, its paintings and statues, highly delighted him.

Having heard much of Ranelagh, he walked thither one evening. Missing his way, he arrived at Chelsea, where a man with a wheelbarrow very civilly showed him the right road, and conversed with him for some time as they walked along. "And finding that I was a subject of the King of Prussia, he desired me, with much eagerness, to relate to him some anecdotes concerning that mighty monarch." He continues :—" At length I arrived at Ranelagh, and having paid my half-crown on entrance, I found myself in a poor, mean-looking, and ill-lighted garden, where I met but few people. I now concluded this could not be the splendid, much-boasted Ranelagh ; and so, seeing, not far from me, a number of people entering a door, I followed them in hopes either to get out again, or to vary the scene.

"But it is impossible to describe, or indeed to conceive, the effect it had on me, when, coming out of the gloom of the garden, I suddenly entered a round building illuminated by many hundred lamps, the

splendour and beauty of which surpassed everything of the kind I had ever seen before. Everything seemed here to be round; above there was a gallery divided into boxes, and in one part of it an organ with a beautiful choir, from which issued both vocal and instrumental music. All around, under this gallery, are handsome painted boxes for those who wish to take refreshments. The floor was covered with mats, in the middle of which are four high black pillars, within which are neat fire-places for preparing tea, coffee, and punch; and all around also there are placed tables, set out with all kinds of refreshments. Circling these four pillars is a kind of magic rotunda, where all the *beau monde* of London move perpetually round and round."

On his taking a seat, a waiter civilly inquires what refreshment he will have, and refuses to accept any payment except a trifling *douceur* for himself, saying that everything was included in the half-crown paid at the door.

"I now went up into the gallery, and seated myself in one of the boxes there, and from thence, becoming all at once a grave and moralising spectator, I looked down on the concourse of people who were still moving round and round in the fairy circle," and then I could easily distinguish several stars, and other orders of knighthood; French *queues* and bags contrasted with plain English heads of hair or professional wigs; old age and youth, nobility and commonalty, all passing each other in the motley swarm. An Englishman who joined me during this my reverie, pointed out to me, on my inquiring, princes and lords, with their dazzling stars, with which they eclipsed the less brilliant part of the company."

The company at Ranelagh appeared to him more select than at Vauxhall; and his landlady assured him that even the poorest families were at the expense of a coach, occasionally, to go to Ranelagh.

One afternoon he inquired for Westminster Hall, and was very politely directed thither by an Englishman; directions being always given with the utmost kindness, he observes. Passing through the Hall he was directed by a dull passage to a small staircase, by which access was obtained to the strangers' gallery of the House of Commons. Here "a very genteel man in black" informed him that he must be introduced by a member. He retreated, not having the honour, as he says, to be acquainted with a member, hearing, as he sullenly took his departure, something remarked about a bottle of wine, the meaning of which he could not conceive. His obliging landlady informed him, however, when he reached home, that he should have given the well-dressed man half-a-crown or a couple of shillings for a bottle of wine. "Happy in this information," he writes, "I went again the next day, when the same man, who before had sent me away, after I had given him only two shillings, very politely opened the door for me, and himself recommended me a good seat in the gallery." The chamber appears to him a rather mean-looking building, not a little resembling a chapel. He describes

the Speaker in his "enormous wig" and a "black cloak," and the mace on the table, &c. He continues :—

"The members of the House of Commons have nothing particular in their dress; they even come into the House in their great-coats, and with boots and spurs. It is not at all uncommon to see a member lying stretched out on one of the benches, while others are debating. Some crack nuts, others eat oranges, or whatever else is in season. There is no end to their going in and out; and as often as any one wishes to go out he places himself before the Speaker and makes him his bow, as if, like a schoolboy, he asked his tutor's permission."

"If it happens that a member rises who is but a bad speaker, or if what he says is generally deemed not sufficiently interesting, so much noise is made that he can scarcely distinguish his own words. This must needs be a distressing situation; and it seems then to be particularly laughable, when the Speaker in his chair, like the tutor in a school, again and again endeavours to restore order, which he does by calling out *To order, to order!* On the contrary, when a favourite member, and one who speaks well and to the purpose, rises, the most perfect silence reigns, and his friends and admirers make their approbation known by calling out *Hear him!* This is always regarded as a great encouragement; and I have often observed that one who began with some diffidence, and even somewhat inauspiciously, has, in the end, been so animated that he has spoken with a torrent of eloquence."

"*Sir* is often introduced in the course of their speeches. It seems also to stand the speaker in some stead when any one's memory fails him, for while he is saying *Sir*, and has thus obtained a little pause, he recollects what is to follow."

"The first day that I was at the House of Commons an English gentleman, who sat next to me in the gallery, very obligingly pointed out to me the principal members, such as Fox, Burke, Rigby, &c., all of whom I heard speak. The debate happened to be whether, besides being made a peer, any other specific reward should be bestowed by the nation on their gallant admiral, Rodney. In the course of the debate, I remember Mr. Fox was very sharply reprimanded by young Lord Fielding for having, when minister, opposed the election of Admiral Hood as a member for Westminster."

"Fox was sitting to the right of the Speaker, not far from the table on which the gilt sceptre lay. He now took his place so near it that he could reach it with his hand, and, thus placed, he gave it many a violent and hearty thump. He justified himself against Lord Fielding, by maintaining that he had not opposed this election in the character of a minister, but as a private person; and, as such, he had freely and honestly given his vote for another. It is impossible for me to describe with what fire and persuasive eloquence he spoke; and how the Speaker in the chair incessantly nodded approbation from beneath his solemn wig. Innumerable voices incessantly called out 'Hear him! hear him!'

and when there was the least sign that he intended to leave off speaking, they no less vociferously exclaimed 'Go on!' and so he continued to speak for nearly two hours."

"Mr. Rigby, in reply, made a short but humorous speech, in which he mentioned of how little consequence the title of *lord* or *lady* was, without money to support it; and finished with the Latin proverb, '*Infelix paupertas quia ridiculos miseros facit.*' He very judiciously observed that previous inquiry should be instituted, whether Admiral Rodney had made any rich prizes or captures, because, if that indeed should be the case, he would not stand in need of further reward in money. I afterwards, almost every day, attended at the Parliament House, and found the most rational amusement."

"When I heard Mr. Pitt speak for the first time, I was astonished that a man of so youthful an appearance should stand up at all; but I was still more astonished to see how, while he spoke, he engaged universal attention."

"The little less than downright open abuse, and the many really rude things which the members said to each other, struck me much. For example: when one has finished, another rises and immediately taxes with absurdity all that *the honourable gentleman* (for with this title the members of the House of Commons always compliment each other) had just advanced."

He contemplates the election of Sir Cecil Wray for Westminster, and is much impressed thereby. He says:—"All the enthusiasm of my earliest years, kindled by the patriotism of the illustrious heroes of Rome, was now revived. In this happy country the lowest member of society unequivocally testifies the interest which he takes in everything of a public nature."

"When Fox, who was among the voters, arrived at the beginning of the election, he was received with an universal shout of joy. When the election was nearly over, the people took it into their heads to hear him speak, and every one called out 'Fox! Fox!' and he was obliged to come forward and speak."

"When the whole was over, the rampant spirit of liberty, and the wild impatience of a genuine English mob, were exhibited in perfection. In a few minutes the scaffolding, benches, and chairs were completely destroyed, and the mat with which it had been covered torn into long strips or pieces, with which they encircled multitudes of people of all ranks. These they hurried along with them, and everything else that came in their way, as trophies of joy; and thus, in the midst of exultation and triumph, they paraded through many of the populous streets of London."

Of Mr. Foote's theatre he writes:—"The winter theatres being shut, I twice attended that in the Haymarket. A few excepted, the comedians whom I saw were certainly nothing extraordinary. For a seat in the boxes you pay five shillings, in the pit three, in the first gallery two,

and in the second, or upper gallery, one shilling. It is the tenants in this upper gallery who, for their shilling, make all that uproar for which the English playhouses are so famous. Often whilst I sat in the pit did a rotten orange, or the peel of an orange, fly past me, and once one of them actually hit my hat, without my daring to look around, for fear another might come plump into my face. Besides this perpetual pelting from the gallery which renders an English playhouse so uncomfortable, there is no end of their calling out and knocking with their sticks, till the curtain is drawn up. I sometimes heard, too, the people in the lower or middle gallery quarrelling with those of the upper. Behind me, in the pit, sat a young fop, who, in order to display his costly stone buckles with the utmost brilliancy, continually put his foot on my bench, and even sometimes upon my coat. In the boxes, quite in a corner, sat several servants, who were said to be placed there to keep the seats for the families they served. They seemed to sit remarkably close and still; the reason of which was, I was told, their apprehension of being pelted; for if one of them dares but to look out of the box, he is immediately saluted with a shower of orange-peel from the gallery."

"In Foote's *Nabob* there are sundry local and personal satires, which are entirely lost to a foreigner. The character of the Nabob was performed by a Mr. Palmer." "The *Agreeable Surprise* is really a very diverting farce. Mr. Edwin, with a great deal of nature and original humour, here acted the part of Lingo. This Lingo is in love with a certain country girl, whose name is Cowslip, to whom he makes a declaration of his passion in a strange, mythological, grammatical style and manner, and to whom, amongst other fooleries, he sings, quite enraptured, the following air, and seems to work himself up to such a transport of passion as quite overpowers him:—

Amo, amas,
I love a lass
As a cedar tall and slender.
Sweet Cowslip's grace
Is her nominative case,
And she's of the feminine gender.

This Edwin, in all his comic characters, still preserves something so inexpressibly good-tempered in his countenance, that notwithstanding all his burlesques, and even grotesque buffoonery, you cannot but be pleased with him. He was obliged to sing himself almost hoarse, because it pleased the upper gallery, or *the gods*, as the English call them, to roar out '*Encore!*'

"The character of Amelia was performed by an actress who made her first appearance on the stage, and, from a natural timidity, spoke rather low. 'Speak louder!' cried out some rude fellow from the upper gallery; and she immediately, with infinite condescension, did all she could, and not unsuccessfully, to please an upper gallery critic. The persons near me in the pit were often extremely lavish of their applause,

and sometimes clapped a single solitary sentiment which was as unmeaning as short."

Mr. Moritz praises the fine, ruddy, slim, active English boys, with their free, loose, and natural dress; their bosoms open, their hair cut on their forehead, and flowing naturally behind in ringlets. After eighteen, he remarks that "they begin to have their hair dressed and curled, to give the head a large bushy appearance, and half their backs are covered with powder. The usual dress is, in summer, a short white waistcoat, black breeches, white silk stockings, and a frock, generally of very dark blue cloth. Officers rarely wear their uniforms, and are to be known only by a cockade in their hats." He remarks that "electricity happens at present to be the puppet-show of the English."

Mr. Moritz describes the clergy as free in their mode of life. On Sundays, however, they wear "long robes with wide sleeves." The lamps appear to him to give the streets the aspect of being illuminated for a festive occasion. In the coffee-houses he says that there generally prevails a decorous stillness and silence, the greater part reading the newspapers.

He determines to take a walking tour through England. He is charmed with the scenery of Richmond, and then proceeds on his way towards Oxford. Throughout his journey the people seem much surprised at seeing a respectably dressed man on foot. Stage-coaches, post-chaises, and vehicles of all sorts continually roll along the roads. Now and then a farmer on horseback said to him with an air of pity, "'Tis warm walking, sir!" and when he passed through the villages the old women would say, "Good God!" At Windsor he receives but scant civility at his inn, and at Nuneham they altogether refuse him a bed; and he is about to pull off his great-coat to lie down beneath a tree in a field adjoining the road, when a voice asks "if he would accept of company." It proves to belong to an Oxford clergyman who has been doing duty in the neighbourhood, and the two trudge on to Oxford conversing upon theology. When they arrive, Mr. Moritz is too tired to admire the beauty of the High Street, on which his companion expatiates. The Oxonian then says that he will procure a bed for him at an alehouse before he goes to his college, and presently knocks at a door. The German, to his astonishment, sees several gentlemen in academic dress sitting round a large table, each with his pot of beer before him. These appear to have been Fellows. One of them disgusts Mr. Moritz by starting sundry objections to the Bible. Some of them were acquainted with a Professor at Helmstadt, concerning whom they inquire. Mr. Moritz observes that the colleges are mostly in the Gothic taste, and overloaded with ornament. He thinks Christ Church and Queen's the best built. He greatly admires the altar-piece of All Souls, by Mengs, representing Mary Magdalen at the feet of Jesus; and he remarks that the Bodleian Library is not unworthy to be compared with the Vatican at Rome. He is much delighted with Christ Church meadows. "Going along the

street we met the English Poet Laureat, Warton, now rather an elderly man, and yet he is still the Fellow of a College" (Trinity). Mr. Moritz finds himself well treated in the roadside inns, supping occasionally in the kitchens, of which he says that he has read in Fielding's fine novels. When he has learnt to say to the landlord, "Here's to you!" before he takes his first drink of ale, he meets with much cordiality. He sometimes is only charged a shilling for an excellent supper and bed. On a Sunday he attends church in a village where he had found a party of militia dancing, singing, and making merry. The service begins at half-past nine. The boys of the village are drawn up, with the white frills of their shirts well displayed, to pull off their hats to the clergyman, who comes on horseback. He is much pleased with the vocal and instrumental music of the hymn, and he says that the clergyman made a short but very proper discourse on the text, "Not all of they who say Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven." He remarks that the clergyman wore his own hair, decently dressed. He thought that the reverend gentleman returned the bows of the farmers rather coldly. These, he remarks, were dressed not like those of his own country, in coarse frocks, but with some taste, in fine, good cloth; and were to be distinguished from the people of the town not so much by their dress, as by their greater simplicity and modesty of behaviour.

He states that the women of the lower class wore a short cloak of red cloth; "but women in general, from the highest to the lowest, wear hats, which differ from each other less in fashion than they do in fineness." "Fashion is so generally attended to amongst the English women that the poorest maidservant is careful to be in the fashion." "There is, through all ranks here, not near so great a distinction between high and low as there is in Germany."

He prefers the hats to the "unsightly hoods and caps" of the German women of the rank of citizen. There was no regular afternoon service at his village church, but the young people went to church and sang a few psalms. Others of the congregation were present, and this service was conducted with much decorum. Altogether he seems to have been much delighted with the English village (Nettlebed).

He hears of highwaymen and footpads, but he only once encounters any one likely to belong to the fraternity. A fellow in a brown frock, round hat, and with a thick stick, asks him, on the road, for a halfpenny to buy some bread, as he has had nothing to eat that day. The German excuses himself by saying that he has nothing less than shillings; whereupon the man grasps his stick and says, "God bless my soul!" in such a manner that Mr. Moritz gives him a shilling. This he much regretted, as a coach came up immediately after.

He is altogether charmed with the scenery of England both in the rich rural districts of the midland counties, and amongst the wilder regions of Derbyshire. Once he has to spend a night at a small inn filled with colliers, than whom he says that he never saw ruder or rougher

people. They spent the evening in cursing, quarrelling, drinking, singing, and fighting. However, they do not molest him, but, on the contrary, each one drinks his health again and again; and he is careful to drink theirs in return, and say, "Your healths, gentlemen all." After leaving Matlock he meets a saddler, who walks with him for some distance, and, to his astonishment, speaks of Homer, Horace, and Virgil, and quotes passages with great propriety. And the saddler also falls into poetic rapture as he points out the beauties of a valley near Tideswell, where he lived. It appeared that his father had once been rich. Moritz inspects the wonders of Derbyshire, and ascends the mountain above Castleton. At the top of the green mountain he says that he met with some neat country girls, who had been milking their cows, and were coming along with their pails on their heads. "This little party formed a beautiful group, when some of them, with their milk pails, took shelter, as it began to rain, under a part of the rock; beneath which they sat down on natural stone benches, and there, with pastoral innocence and glee, talked and laughed till the shower was over."

Altogether the impression derived from this German divine's account of England, is that its inhabitants were enjoying peace and plenty to the utmost. The wars in which the country was engaged little affected its internal life. Prosperity and contentment certainly seem to have reigned throughout the land. Almost everywhere he appears to see a healthy, cleanly, well-fed, and well-mannered population. Such incivility as he encounters is chiefly from waiters who cannot believe in the respectability of the traveller on foot. Burton, he says, formed an exception. Here he found a rude population who pointed at him as a foreigner.

On returning to London Mr. Moritz ascends to the top of a coach, where he finds himself in company with a decently-dressed young farmer and a blackamoor. The getting up alone, he says, was at the risk of one's life. He was obliged to sit, apparently at the outer part of the seat, "with nothing to hold by but a little handle fastened on the side." "The moment that we set off I fancied that I saw certain death await me. The machine rolled along with prodigious rapidity, and we seemed to fly into the air. From Harborough to Leicester I had a most dreadful journey—it rained incessantly; and as before we had been covered with dust, we were now soaked with rain."

Festival among the Basques.

THE games and festivals of the modern Basques furnish, perhaps, the nearest approach in Western Europe to what may have been—their grosser and more brutal features excepted—the Olympic and Isthmian games of ancient Greece. Boxing, wrestling, chariot and horse racing have no place in the assemblies of the Basques. The Eisteddfod of Wales presents the literary side of these meetings; the gathering of the Highlanders at Braemar, the athletic. But the Basques unite recreation of mind with that of body; prizes are given equally for the best prose or verse composition, to the best improvisatore, to the successful ball-player, and to the athlete. But the most elaborate of all the spectacles, the *pastorale* or *tragédie*, a dramatic performance with dance and music, which lasts a whole day, has not even a prize at all; rarely does the sum collected equal the expense of setting up the piece; and, stranger still, the most graceful of all the exercises, the manly dance, is actually paid for by the dancers. At the close of a *pastorale* the right of performing the first dance on the vacant stage is put up to auction by the actors, and the villages or *communes*, bidding against each other, purchase the privilege of sending their youth to dance the first *saut Basque* alone before the public on the stage. It is not money, but artistic enjoyment and local fame, which is the great stimulant to success at these fêtes.

In another respect these fêtes are like those of the Greeks: they are always held in the open air. The *pastorale* or *tragédie* is performed on a rough platform, enclosed by no barrier, open to all the spectators, and with the sky alone for its roof. The long ball court, with its seats at the upper end and down the sides, is equally uncovered. Like the Greek theatre it is often distinguished for the beauty of the site. In the distance at least the mountains are almost always to be seen; secular trees often overshadow the stone or wooden seats on which the principal spectators sit, and afford a most welcome shade from the midday sun; while, near the coast, the breaking wave with its deeper murmur fills up the intervals of the buzz of conversation, of music, of shouting, or of applause. These different kinds of relaxation are not, however, found combined all in any one district. In La Soule alone, the most easterly of the French divisions of the Pays Basque, are dramatic representations given; it is there too that dancing flourishes most, and there alone are the strange animal dances, with their quaint tunes, still preserved. There too, on the outside of the throng, athletes may be seen throwing the heavy iron bar, or leaping with a somersault in a hop, skip, and

jump. In the Labourd and in the neighbouring parts of Guipuzcoa and Navarre the ball games are the most keenly practised, though they are common everywhere; and there the 'gift and habit of improvisation is most frequent, and the *coplaçari*, makers of couplets, or *bersolari*, makers of verses, contend against each other in poetic strife; it is there too that prizes are most frequently given for written compositions both in prose and verse.

We propose now to give a brief description of this year's fête at Sare, a village of the Labourd which boasts the best ball-players, and where, owing to the liberality of M. Antoine d'Abbadie, the distinguished Membre de l'Institut, the art of improvisation has been most carefully fostered.

The fête was most sadly curtailed by the weather. Nothing could be done on the second and third days, and but little even on the first. The morning of September 11 opened very gloomily. It had rained heavily during the night, and in the morning rain was still falling. Little by little things looked brighter. It was impossible to begin the sports at the appointed hour, but towards noon men might be seen with sponges sopping up the water on the court. Wood shavings were then strewn over the wettest parts, fires were kindled, and thus the place was sufficiently dried by the afternoon to allow of the first international match between French and Spanish Basques being played.

The ball court here, as often elsewhere, is in the centre of the village, in front of the *mairie*. Formerly, when leathern gloves alone were used, the length did not exceed ninety yards; but since the invention first of a wooden, then of a wicker gauntlet, bound to the back of the right hand, beyond which it extends about a foot, the length of the court has been extended up to over 100 yards. At Sare the distance from the extreme wall of the court to the *mairie* is 115 measured mètres (124 yards); yet the ball, which weighs 125 grammes (over four ounces), will sometimes strike the first story before it reaches the ground, and will be returned clear over the 20-foot wall at the other end. This will give some idea of the muscular force required. The ball, though driven with such force, is constantly taken before it touches the ground, and to an uninitiated spectator it appears as if the impact would almost tear off the striker's arm; but an imperceptible yielding movement, only to be acquired by practice, before giving the forward blow, renders it harmless, and even gives an appearance of ease to the stroke. The width of the court is about 25 feet. The chief players, on whom the success of the game mainly depends, are on the in-side—the one who stands at the wall and receives the ball from the server, and strikes it back to the farther end of the court. On the out-side it is the *butor*, or server, and the player who stands at the extreme end of the court; the other players stand between, one of each side opposite the other. The sides may be of three, four, five, or even of six each. The *butor*, or server, stands at about 25 yards from the wall, and strikes the ball with

his open hand as it bounds from a small wooden or stone stand on which he has let it fall, so as to make it touch first a small paved spot in front of the central portion of the wall, then rise and strike the wall, when it is caught at the rebound by the opposing player, and hurled in a magnificent curve to the farther end. The great aim of the server is to strike the flagged space just at its juncture with the wall; the ball does not then rise, but shoots along the ground, trying to the utmost the skill of the striker to take it at all. A very picturesque feature of the game are the attitudes into which the striker is necessarily thrown by the very varied conditions under which he takes the ball. He first stands facing the bowler, follows with his eye the coming ball, turns to see where it will strike the wall, judges of the rebound, then, swiftly turning, strikes it with his utmost force—sometimes at his full height, if the ball bounds high, sometimes half stooping, sometimes on his back, as the only possible way of taking it when it shoots along the ground. The postures thus assumed often present a fine study for a sculptor. One which frequently occurs when the ball is low is singularly like that of the archer in the Æginetan marbles. The left leg is extended as far as possible forwards, the right bent under the body; the fingers of the left hand and arm fall naturally and lightly on the left knee; the head and body are thrown back; the muscles of the uplifted right arm are still in full tension from the force of the blow; and the wistful, eager face and eyes are watching the ball as it speeds in lofty curve to the most distant player. As in cricket, a wet day is in favour of the bowler or server; a fine day, when the ball bounds high, in favour of the striker. On the present occasion the day was all in favour of the servers; again and again the strikers were on their backs, sometimes fairly rolling over on the ground; yet, such was their skill, they rarely altogether missed the ball. The excitement of the game when the ball is returned four or five times in succession from either end of the court is intense. It is curious then to note how all the heads of the vast crowd turn simultaneously, as if moved by machinery, in the direction of the ball's flight. This does not very often happen; at the second or third stroke the ball is usually driven along the ground, and is stopped or returned by one of the middle players, and the score is reckoned by the place where it finally rests. The drawback of the game is that the ball is so often sent out of court, and *falta*, a fault, is called; but it has this advantage over cricket, that every one on both sides is always actively engaged—none are standing still. A blow from a ball of such a weight, driven by the gauntlet, is not slight; yet the spectators are quite unprotected, and the squeezing, and ducking, and warding with parasols and umbrellas when the ball comes among them afford great merriment to those in safety at a distance. The players are wonderfully quick in dodging the ball when it is not their interest to take it; but if, in the rush to strike it, a spectator gets in the way, he is bowled over without mercy, and must take his fall good-humouredly. An apology is almost always tendered immediately

afterwards ; but any attempt to resent would be laughed at, or be dangerous, as all present would take the player's part. The counting goes, as in tennis, by 15, 30, 40, and the game. There are *chasses* and *demi-chasses*, which it would be difficult and tedious to explain. Three or five umpires are always appointed, and meet in the middle of the court for solemn consultation on any doubtful point. Their decision is never impugned ; but in very dubious cases they call in the aid of any of the spectators, but so as always to keep the number of deciding voices odd.

The best players are as well known as are our eminent cricketers. "Who is that?" I asked in my simplicity of a chance neighbour. "That! That is the famous Arrondo," replied he, with a glance of such intensely contemptuous pity that I questioned him no more. As a rule the Spanish Basques are better players than the French, and are often stronger men. The French account for this superiority by the greater laziness of the Spanish. "We work," say they, "and have fewer holidays; they don't work, but play whenever they like, and, besides, have many more holidays to practise in." On the present occasion, however, the Spanish Basques were both smaller and fairer men than the French, and after a fine struggle, in which the game was twice called even, they were beaten. The victory was chiefly due to a *douanier*, Berterretche, who served on the French side, and to their two strikers, Arrondo and Zilhar. "Bravo, Zilhar!" was shouted again and again during the contest ; but the beaten party were allowed to have played a fine game.

Among other characteristics the stranger will notice how, at noon, when the Angelus is sounded, the play stops on the instant, spectators and players uncover, the band plays softly the Angelic hymn, every head is bowed in silence, the fingers move in rapid crossings, and the game proceeds as before. "Who says Basque says Catholic," is a country proverb. The games for money prizes are contested by those who may be called, in a sense, professional players ; but on other occasions men of all ranks join, and, though never in a public match, at other times the long cassock of a priest may be seen whirling in wondrous gyrations as its owner takes his part in the game where every one else is in shirt-sleeves and pantaloons.

Hardly had the game of ball been concluded, and the spectators left the seats which they had patiently occupied for four hours, when the *garde-champêtre*, a fine old sailor, mounted the wall at the end of the court, and, using his hands like a speaking-trumpet, summoned the improvisatore to a more gentle contest. First a blind old labourer, Anibar of Sare, appeared, led on by a boy. As he crept slowly along the wall, twelve feet above the gathering audience below, there was a cry lest he should fall, but the boy held him firmly by the shoulders. Then a pause and a murmur of disappointment began that there would be no other candidate ; but a curly-headed youth, Pelho of Cambo, came

forward, and then a shout announced one of the most noted of the Spanish *bersolari*, Elicegni, *el molinero* (the miller) of Oyarzun, in Guipuzcoa; a labourer from Echalar, in Navarre, then stood up; then Makharra of Souraide, and a man from Baigorri, whose heart, however, failed him before it came to his turn, made up the full list. The jury, who sat at right angles to the competitors and on a level with them, were four of the best known literary men of the Pays Basque—Dr. Guibbeau, *maire* of St. Jean de Luz, winner of poetical prizes in his younger days; Captain Elisamboure, best of living song-writers in Basque on this side the Pyrenees; M. Sallaberry, of Mauléon, author of the best collection of Basque songs set to music;* and Captain Duvoisin, the excellent translator of the Bible into the Labourdin dialect under the auspices of Prince L. L. Bonaparte.

The contest was conducted in this manner. The candidates were successively brought forward in pairs to the edge of the wall, standing high above the heads of the mass of the audience, chiefly men, in the court beneath. Then ensued a rapid consultation among the jury, and the theme for poetical debate was given out. Anibar the blind defended the cause of "Sobriety" against young Pelho of Cambo, who maintained that of "Good Cheer." Each sang, or rather chanted, a verse at the top of his voice, to which his rival replied. The old man, in a voice somewhat broken by age, started with a stanza which might be the prelude to anything. Pelho looked horribly nervous, and squeezed his *beret* (cap) in his hands as if he were doomed under severest penalties to wring out the last drop of any moisture that might be in it. Very slowly he sang his first verse, looking anything but like an advocate of good cheer. Anibar replied, but again shot wide of the mark. Pelho was less nervous than before. His third verse in reply raised the first burst of applause: his nervousness wore off; his face grew smiling, his voice firmer, his song quicker and more lively, and at the close of his sixth stanza he was proclaimed the winner. One could not help pitying the poor old blind man as he was led back to a seat where he sat dejectedly to the end. The next pair called were *el molinero* and Etcheto, the labourer from Navarre, who disputed in Spanish Basque. The subject given was the lot of a miller compared with that of a labourer; each upheld his own calling. The miller had far the best of it, and turned the laugh on his own side by his quick repartees when accused of taking toll of grist and meal, and was proclaimed the victor. The man from Baigorri, feeling perhaps that he had no chance against the miller, had meanwhile quietly disappeared, so Pelho again was pitted against Makharra, a labourer of Souraide. The subject was "Life with Contentment at Home" against "The Search for Wealth by Emigration to America." The new comer was smiling and confident, rapid in improvisation, and sang well with an agreeable voice; but

* *Chants populaires du Pays Basque*, par J. D. J. Sallaberry. Bayonne: 1870.

though he had the more popular side of "Home Life" he failed as a poet, and Pelho won his second trial amid loud applause; but the contest had been closer than those preceding it. Now came on the final struggle between Pelho and the miller, the one a French, the other a Spanish Basque, a circumstance which gave almost an international character to the competition. There was, however, but little expectation among the French that their young champion would hold his own against the redoubted victor of many a former contest. It was amid breathless silence (except on the part of some chattering girls) that the two began. The miller defended the condition of "A poor Peasant Proprietor," Pelho that of "A Servant or *Métayer* (tenant) under a Good Master." The appearance and attitude of the men were very different.

The *molínero* is a man of barely middle height, but of Herculean build, and he stood with arms folded across his broad chest, occasionally, during a pause, taking a hasty sip from a small wine skin proffered by his brother. Pelho, taller and slighter, crushed his cap in his right hand, and when singing swayed both arms to the tune in no ungraceful fashion. At the close of each of his first few verses he turned with an arch glance to see their effect on his opponent; but he discontinued this when he found him always ready. The miller sang of the blessings of independence, of the charms of ancestral property, of being at no man's beck and call, of the rent which the tenant farmer had to pay, &c. &c.

"Yes," sang Pelho in reply; "but I have no anxiety; everything is provided for me; my master is kind and good; I don't get into debt, and when I have paid my rent I have still money to put by. I do not borrow to cultivate my land, and have no fear of mortgage and of lawsuit." The improvisation was very rapid. Every verse was saluted with applause; each was evidently ready as soon as his rival ceased, and began the instant that he could be heard. For some six or seven verses Pelho held his own well, but after that the physical strength of the miller began to tell. He seemed as if he could go on for ever; but Pelho was beginning to look worn and exhausted, and at the close of the thirteenth stanza the jury mercifully decided that the prize (80 francs) should be divided between them. Two verses of thanks from each to the jury, to the audience, and to M. d'Abbadie, the prize-giver, concluded the scene, and the successful competitors were hurried off to the *mairie* to receive the prize, Pelho being hugged and slapped and almost torn to pieces by his admiring friends. It was striking to notice here, as in the pastorals, how much further the voice can be heard in the open air in singing, chant, or recitation than in speaking. The jury, though seated near to them, had to shout at the top of their voices to the candidates, and were even then heard with difficulty, while every word of the younger singers was distinctly heard. Each trial lasted from ten to twelve minutes, the better performers getting through double the number of verses which the inferior actors did in the same time. Thus the first

pair sang only six verses each, the last thirteen each in almost the same time. The improvisatori are almost all of the class of labourers, peasant farmers, or artisans. On one occasion a girl appeared among the candidates at Sare, and—hear, O advocates of women's rights—was at once unfairly handicapped by the jury, and ordered to compose in the familiar "thou" conjugation instead of the ordinary "you" form. She did it fairly well, but failed to obtain a prize.

There is, however, another prize given at these festivals, for which men of all ranks compete, a written competition in verse, and occasionally in prose. The best writers among both French and Spanish Basques engage in this. While the above improvisations were going on, printed copies of the two prize poems were handed round. The first was gained by Pierre Dibarrart, the precentor of the church at Baigorry, for a song of eleven verses called "The Charcoal-burner on the Mountain;" the second by Larrondoberri, a yeoman of Sare, for a fable in the irregular verse of La Fontaine, "The Wolf turned Saint." Neither are above the usual level of prize poems. In fact, these contests, though undoubtedly keeping alive a certain amount of literary taste, have produced no really fine poem. The best, perhaps, is one of recent years on the "Basque Language," by Sr. Arrese y Beitia; none of the others are above the rank of pleasing songs.

The next day the rain was unceasing, and so few came to the fête that the contest for the best "irrintz," the peculiar shrill mountain cry of the Basques, as the "jodel" is among the Tyrolese, could not be entered on. The rain, however, did not deter the peasants from bringing their cattle to show for prizes on the Wednesday morning; but nothing else could be done, and, except on the afternoon of the first day, the festival was utterly spoilt by the weather.

W. W.

The Isle of Portland.

THE last fragment of a submerged land, a lost Lyonesse of undoubted historical reality, stretches southward opposite the little headland of the Nothe at Weymouth for four and a half miles into the stormy mid-current of the English Channel. It is not a beautiful or a picturesque object, at least when seen at close quarters, that desolate, rocky, treeless block that bears the name of Portland Island; and yet it deserves a certain modicum of respect for its ancient character as the solitary surviving portion of a drowned and sea-invaded lowland district. Alone among all the lands that once united the shores of Hants and Dorset to the honeycombed precipices of Caux and the Côtentin, the hard rocky promontory of Portland has managed to hold its own against the waves that have eaten away all the softer surrounding strata, and to this day it projects its rugged Bill boldly and sternly into the surging waters of the Race with a sort of solid unconscious determination to face the worst that angry waves can do against it. What adds pathos to the lonely situation of the ancient island, too, is the fact that while the sea is attacking it slowly from north, south, east, and west, in that systematic, quiet, business-like manner peculiar to Nature, who cares nothing for time, be it centuries or æons, man, in his reckless, hasty, boyish fashion, is helping her on with true human impetuosity by levelling the top far faster than the eternal sea itself can undermine the solid bottom. The autochthones of Portland, the actual sons of the soil, chips of the old block, born and bred for centuries as a distinct people, with something stony and gritty in their very look—they themselves even are now for the most part earning their livelihood by the staple indigenous industry of exporting the island. Cubic acres of it have gone already, and cubic acres more are waiting on its quays, to help in adding an extra mile or so of streets to that vast agglomeration that Cobbett used to call the Wen, and ordinary prosaic people know as London. Surely the time has come for the historian of Portland to arise, before all that is left of it must be looked for in St. Paul's Cathedral, and in half a million other assorted buildings and public works in all quarters of the United Kingdom. It will not die without at least becoming its own cenotaph: and of it we may say as was said of its arch-destroyer, Wren, "*Si monumentum quæris, circumspice.*"

The best general idea of Portland as it exists at the present day can be got by looking at its outline from the great West Bay, anywhere between the Cobb at Lyme Regis and Bridport Harbour. Seen in this, its most characteristic aspect, it appears like a huge wedge or cuneiform mass

of rock, laid flat upon the water, with its blunt thick end turned toward the mainland, and its tapering point shelving regularly with a gradual declivity towards the Bill and the open Channel. The view most familiar to tourists, however, is that from the fort on the Nothe at Weymouth, where it shows its blunt high broadside alone to the spectator opposite; and in this aspect we lose entirely the tapering contour, which forms the true rationale and *raison d'être* of Portland's whole past history. Briefly to describe its general features, as a preparation for the annals of its origin, I may say that the island consists of a great block of stone, tilted up gently from its southern extremity at the Bill, where it rises only twenty feet above sea level, to its northern summit at the Verne fort, where it towers to a height of nearly five hundred feet above the surface of the glassy bay at its feet. From end to end the slope is gradual and almost unbroken, so that from the top of the Verne ramparts you look down over every acre of the main plateau, spread like a single shelving terrace or inclined plane before your eyes. Only at the sides, where a few landslips have tumbled about the strata in wild confusion and formed a couple of ragged undercliffs, is there any deviation from the general bleak monotony of the sloping surface. Elsewhere, all the winds of heaven blow evenly and uninterruptedly across the open plateau, and not a hill, dale, or copse gives on any hand a single coign of shelter from their piercing onslaught. Portland is one of the strangest and literally most outlandish nooks in all England—a bit of some other and sterner land sorted incongruously with our own gentle Dorsetshire uplands: it is interesting by virtue of its very ugliness; but even its warmest admirer could hardly assert that it has any the faintest pretension to beauty or variety of outline.

In geographical contour, as one sees it upon the map, the island has a roughly triangular shape, its base facing Weymouth and the mainland, while its apex lies at the Bill of Portland, that is to say the actual rocky point by the lighthouses at the south end. The greatest length, from north to south, is four miles and a half; the greatest width, from east to west, a mile and three-quarters. But though always called an island in ordinary parlance, and practically such to the present day, it is, according to strict geographical definition, a peninsula, being united to the Dorset main by that famous barrier, the Chesil Beach, a vast shingle bank, of whose origin I shall have much to say a little later on. This enormous natural breakwater, as everybody knows, does not join the opposite shore at once, but runs on, in a graceful curve, for ten miles westward to Abbotsbury, where it reaches the mainland, and then continues as an ordinary beach of exceptional size as far as Bridport Harbour. From Portland to Abbotsbury, it is divided from the coastline by a sort of backwater or lagoon—a Haff, as they say on the Baltic—known by the good old English name of the Fleet, so that it runs for ten miles with the open sea on one hand, and this isolated arm or branch on the other. There is no physical feature in all England which has given

rise to more discussion among geologists as to its origin and nature than this extraordinary natural breakwater, which keeps the waves of the Channel out of Weymouth Bay, and gives Portland Roads their entire value as a harbour of refuge for vessels drifting before violent storms up the turbulent waterway from the open Atlantic.

And now, after this brief geographical description of Portland as it actually is, let us go back to get at the previous question, how it came to be so. And first of all, let us consider how the materials of which it is composed were originally accumulated in their existing positions.

No portion of the matter now forming the Isle of Portland is earlier in date than the oolitic period. Of course I do not mean to assert that the actual atoms of which the block is composed then for the first time came into being; but it was then that they were first gathered together from the wear and tear of older rocks, and deposited in something like their modern arrangement at the same point of earth which they still occupy. The floor or base of the island consists of Kimmeridge clay, so that we need not here deal with any period of time earlier than that at which this clay was accumulated on the bottom of an oolitic sea. About half-way through the great secondary æon of our earth's history, then, long before any of the animals or plants which now occupy its surface had begun to be developed in their existing forms, the branch of an ancient Atlantic spread like a primæval Mediterranean over a large part of France, England, and Central Europe, including the English Channel, and with it the site of the future Portland. In the hollows of its bottom, in this district at least, there gathered for many ages a deep muddy deposit, washed down into its centre by the tawny streams of many a forgotten Nile or Tiber. For how long a time this state of things continued we can form some vague conception from the fact that the bed of mud, now stiffened into clay, has a total depth from top to bottom of six hundred feet. In other words, the mud went on accumulating slowly and steadily in the central basin until it had attained that enormous thickness. In the sea above it, great saurians swarmed like sharks in our own tropics; and their vertebræ are still discovered in this useless fundamental layer of the Portland block at the present day. Ammonites of various kinds also sailed upon the surface, and oyster-beds gathered thickly in the shoals and banks above the congenial ooze. Shells of many other mollusks, needles of belemnites, spines of early sea-urchins, and tubes of calcareous worms are found in fair numbers in this Kimmeridge clay, either at Portland itself, or in the cliffs near Sandsfoot Castle on the opposite mainland. How the beds came afterwards to be thus elevated high and dry to their present position is a question with which we shall have to concern ourselves a little later.

If Portland were all made up of Kimmeridge clay, however, it would be a place of very little importance or interest; for it is a totally different formation that gives the island its economical value and its geographical features. Indeed, for the matter of that, if Portland had been all Kim-

meridge clay, there would be no Portland at all now-a-days to write about; for the whole place would long since have been washed away by the ceaseless beating of the Channel waves on so soft a material. But after the regular level floor of oozy mud had been deposited on the bottom of the upper oolitic sea, some new change of conditions, due doubtless to slow secular changes in the elevation of the continents and the distribution of land and water, caused an alteration in the nature of the material laid down on the site of Portland and the surrounding region. Instead of mud, a thick layer of sand began to be washed down on top of the Kimmeridge clay. This sand now forms the lowest of what are distinctively known as the Portland beds: it was deposited as a loose silt of a bluish-grey colour, inclosing little nodules of green earth; but it has since been consolidated into a hard compact sandstone by the pressure of the superincumbent masses or the upward thrust of later elevating energies. Such a condition of things continued for a sufficient time to allow some eighty feet thickness of sand to cover the soft mud flooring. But even as yet we have not got to the stone that gives Portland its chief modern importance. These hard "merchantable" beds were accumulated above the sandstone, but like it at the bottom of a deep sea. The lowest and oldest of them consists of an impure cherty limestone, unfit for building purposes, and mixed with little bits of ragged flint. It has a thickness of forty feet. Above it, however, another set of layers gathered on the bottom, composed of finer materials, which have hardened under pressure into a good workable building stone. The earliest of these valuable layers, the base bed or lower tier, consists of a delicate white freestone, soft enough to be employed for ornamental work, and eight feet in thickness; for one may generally observe that the good things of this world are small and scanty, while the useless or bad ones are abundant and flourishing. Above it, a second useful deposit gathered to the same depth, and this now bears the name of the whit bed or upper tier. It is the best Portland stone, and the one at present most generally quarried, though here I am certainly anticipating a few million years or so. Finally, above them all, a shallow layer of somewhat different material, only three feet and a half in thickness, was deposited as the last effort of the upper oolitic sea; and this final layer now bears among the quarrymen the curious name of the roach.

All these special Portland beds, originally deposited over a considerable district on every side, were of strictly marine origin. Ammonites, cockle shells, oysters, and mussels, all of course of very antiquated types, are found in the underlying Portland sands: the lower limestone yields somewhat similar forms; in the two building beds (the lower and upper tiers) fossils are comparatively rare, which partly gives the stone its value; but in the roach, casts of mollusks are so abundant that the whole layer consists of little more than a shell-bank concreted into a mass with plastic matter. Throughout the whole period, great saurians continued to flap their ungainly paddles above the site of

Portland; and corals grew abundantly in what is now the basin of the West Bay.

At the close of the oolitic epoch, however, a great change came over the conditions of this portion of the English Channel. So far, there had been alterations of relative level, and variations in the nature of the sediment that gathered on the bottom: mud had given way to sand, and sand to fine siliceous detritus; but the whole district had remained permanently submarine during the vast ages which must have gone to the accumulation of some eight or nine hundred feet of solid material on the floor of the oolitic ocean. Now, however, a vaster movement of the earth gradually took place, and elevated the future Portland for a while high above the level of the surrounding sea. Dry land temporarily usurped the place of water; and when I say temporarily, I should like to explain that I am using the word in a Pickwickian and geological sense, to embrace an interval of a few thousand centuries or so. At the same time, it must be borne in mind that this was by no means the final elevation to which Portland owes its present position; it was merely a preparatory effort on the part of nature, to be followed by long submergences, of which here at least no record now remains. We can mark the gradual rise of the district, first by the occurrence of the shell-bank known as the roach, and then by the band of dirt separating the Portland beds from the Purbeck formation which now caps the back of the island. These Purbeck layers themselves are all of terrestrial or freshwater origin. During the long period which they represent, Portland and the surrounding districts lay high and dry as part of the great European continent; being sometimes covered by thick subtropical forests, and sometimes included in the bed of a vast inland lake, an Ontario or Superior of the secondary age. Memorials of both stages are left at intervals in successive strata, for the district was more than once during this epoch a wild jungle, and more than once a freshwater sea.

Of the Purbeck forests in the Isle of Portland, we get the best remains in the so-called dirt-beds. These curious layers consist of the actual surface of the ground in which the trees grew, with the stumps and roots still standing in their natural positions on that very ancient soil. Of course the wood itself is turned into stone, but the form and character of the tissues and leaves is still accurately preserved for us. Some of the trees were cycads, small palm-like tropical species, like the *zamia* of our own conservatories; others were pines of extinct sorts, all requiring a warmer climate than that of Britain at the present day. They have been fortunately preserved for us *in situ*, as they grew, by the fact that when the forests were gently and gradually submerged beneath the waters of the lake, the trees fell into the marshy bottom, and both trunks and stumps, with the soil in which they had grown, were then slowly covered up by a thin layer of lacustrine mud. As a consequence of these frequent changes, which are much like those still occurring in tropical bogs and lagoons, the Purbeck formations consist of numerous

alternating shallow layers, with the stumps of the terrestrial dirt-beds penetrating (or rather surrounded by) the freshwater muds and slates. On the Isle of Portland, taking them in historical or ascending order, they run as follows: First and lowest comes the skull-cap, so called by the quarrymen (whose nomenclature is strictly practical) because it fits tightly just above the Portland building stone. It is a cream-coloured freshwater limestone; and its thickness is about two feet. Next comes the lower dirt-bed, with a few cycads, but no pines. Above this lies the top cap, a hard and troublesome bed to clear away, consisting of freshwater rock with a flinty texture. Then we arrive at the great or upper dirt-bed, a mass of old soil about a foot thick, full of cycads and pine-stumps, with their roots still firmly fixed in the ground where they grew. Above this, again, we get the soft burr, a lake sediment which envelops and preserves our fossil trunks; followed by the aish, a slaty lake deposit; the clay parting, the bacon tier, the dirt seam, and last of all the slate, a hard layer, some ten or fifteen feet thick, and shivered into small flat pieces about an inch through.*

Now, supposing for a moment we consider the history of Portland to have been finally arrested at this Purbeck stage, let us see (by way of recapitulation of these ugly geological facts) what alternations of deposits we should find upon it, if we wanted to dig down and discover what our island was made of. On the top, we should find a thick layer of slate, which would be of no use to us in any way, spreading horizontally over the whole extent of our ideally level island, and forming throughout its surface layer. Digging through this, we should come, one after another, on the dirt-beds and their intervening freshwater stone deposits. At last, we should get to the bottom of the Purbeck strata at the skull-cap, and we should then arrive at two layers of excellent building stone, the Portland beds. If we were practical men, in search of freestone, we should probably stop there; but if we wanted water we should have to go down lower, through the under-layer of limestone and the Portland sands, till at last we reached the impermeable stratum of the Kimmeridge clay. There we should attain the floor of our imaginary land, beneath which we should come upon still earlier strata, of no concern to us in this present inquiry. As a matter of fact, that is pretty much the arrangement of strata that the Portland quarryman actually finds, though he finds them tilted up at an acute angle instead of lying horizontally in the position in which they were originally deposited.

But there is a vast historical gap, not to be so lightly traversed, between the Purbeck epoch and the modern quarryman. The real annals of Portland do not stop short abruptly with the freshwater lake deposits. Though no other and later remains now cap the top of the Verne fortifications, we know, by the analogy of the same formations on the mainland, that a great series of subsequent sediments was super-

* I owe many acknowledgments for these details to Mr. Damon's "Geology of Weymouth."

imposed for ages on the Purbeck beds. The dry land of that era sank once more beneath the cretaceous seas; it received a thick deposit of greensand, of marl, and of chalk; and it was then a second time uplifted for many ages above the surrounding waves. Submerged again under the tertiary Mediterranean, it was coated with a deep bed of London clay and other eocene deposits, like those which still overlie the chalk in the Thames valley. Thus, by the close of the eocene period, what is now the actual mass of Portland must have been covered several hundred feet deep by later sediments, of which the chalk was by far the thickest and most important. How is it that those deposits are not there still? Well, the answer is, they have all been worn away. Tossed about and contorted by later elevating energies or depressing forces, they have first been dislocated and loosened in certain parts, and afterwards disintegrated, partly by the rain or the drainage, and partly by the crumbling action of the air. This denudation of the later deposits has taken place at different times, and has proceeded with different degrees of energy in various places. For example, in the interval which elapsed between the deposition of the chalk and that of the eocene, the chalk surface itself underwent much erosion; for the lower eocene lies upon it unconformably (to use the technical language of geology), that is to say, the upper surface of the chalk is much worn down into hills and valleys, and over these hills and valleys the eocene beds are deposited irrespectively of the underlying layer, exactly as would happen if one of our own land surfaces were now to be buried beneath a sediment-forming sea. On the other hand, the chalk still remains undemolished at Lulworth Cove, within sight of Portland, and forms, in fact, the backbone of Dorsetshire, covering throughout most of its length the various Purbeck and oolitic strata. It is only in a long, narrow belt between the chalk downs and the sea that denudation has proceeded so far as to uncover the Portland stone, the Kimmeridge clay, and even the forest marble which lies beneath them.

Now we cannot exactly say when the greater part of this denudation really took place, but we have very good grounds for believing that most of the superincumbent matter was removed during a period intervening between the eocene era and the great glacial epoch. And the causes which brought it about are also closely connected with the elevation of Portland above the sea, the tilting up of the strata into their present position, and the formation of the island as a distinct geographical entity; so that I think we may fairly go into the question of their action here, as a fundamental point in the history of the peninsula. At some time or other, and, as I shall show hereafter, at some time subsequent to the eocene period, a great upheaving power began to disturb the naturally horizontal beds of the Portland and Weymouth district. This power acted in such a way that its central line of upheaval (or crumpling) lay a little way inland from Weymouth; and it tilted up or arched the strata at this point so that they formed a sort of dome in the

centre, falling away from it on either side to north and south. Imagine to yourself all the strata lying horizontally, one on top of the other, like patterns of cloth in a tailor's sample book. Now imagine a thrust from beneath (or from one side) arching these horizontal sheets upward; and then again remember that just in the centre the strata (being solid and comparatively inelastic) must surely crack and crumble under the expansive energy; and what will then happen? Clearly, the central boss, which ought to be highest, being most broken and dislocated by the thrust, will wear away soonest, and we shall get the lowest strata exposed there, with the higher strata on each side of them, exactly as if one were to cut away the top of the arch in the tailor's pattern book. And this is just what we find to be the case at Portland. The strata rise obliquely at a gentle angle from the sea-level, being tilted northward; they then get cut off by denudation, one after another, as we move inland; and they reappear again in the same order, only with the opposite slope, beyond the central belt of forest marble which marks the line of upheaval. A similar upheaval has operated for many miles along the South Coast, throwing up everywhere older deposits side by side with the chalk, and no doubt so indirectly contributing to the formation of the English Channel.

But why should we date this upheaval later than the eocene period? For this reason. Not only did the elevating force arch and disturb the previously horizontal strata, but it also lifted them all up bodily, so that at a certain point, or rather along a certain line, the connection with the remainder of the strata to northward snapped off short, and the lower strata were raised like a wall against the upper ones. The effect of this would be that we might get a mass of Kimmeridge clay or of Portland stone brought up side by side with a mass of undisturbed chalk. Such lines of disruption are known as faults, because, if we are following up any particular stratum (say a coal seam), when we get to the fault the seam disappears, and has to be looked for at a certain depth above or below the line of disruption. Now, a great line of this description, known as the Ridgeway fault, stretches right across the face of Dorsetshire, at the foot of the chalk downs, and brings the oolitic or Purbeck strata up to the level of the chalk to the north of them. Several other minor faults dislocate the whole set of beds between the downs and the sea; and there can be little or no doubt that they are immediately connected with the upheaving energy which tilted and inclined the entire body of rocks around Portland and Weymouth. But as the Ridgeway fault continues on to the Isle of Wight, where it also affects the eocene strata, it must be later in date than the eocene period. On the other hand, it is almost certainly earlier than the pleistocene; and we may fairly conjecture that the miocene represents the time when this great but slow upheaving action thrust the Portland beds, with their superincumbent chalk and eocene deposits, high above the level of the sea.

Professor Boyd Dawkins has shown grounds for believing that during

the miocene epoch the bed of the English Channel was dry land, and the British Isles formed part of the European continent. It was probably during this period and the pliocene, therefore, that the London clay and the chalk, dislocated by the faults and crumbled by the gradual upheaval, got worn away, at least in great part, from the subjacent Purbeck beds and Portland stone. We know that in some cases at least the miocene surface of England stood two or three thousand feet above its present level, and that denudation since that time has sufficed to wear away that enormous mass of superincumbent material. We may be justified in concluding, therefore, that at the opening of the miocene period the Weymouth and Portland district rose like a hill range, with the line now occupied by the forest marble for its centre; but that by the close of the pliocene period it had been denuded very nearly down to its existing level.

At what exact moment Portland first became a real island (as it once did become) I shall not attempt to decide. But we know that about the beginning of the recent period, that is to say, after the mammoths who left their tusks on the soil of the island had ceased to exist, the bed of the English Channel was slowly lowered, till the sea joined the German Ocean at the Straits of Dover, thus completely insulating Britain from the Continent. When this great but gradual change took place, the waves began to attack the shores of Portland.* They found the rocks here so disposed that they could not fail to assume their present contour and configuration. All round, the sea slowly attacked the soft layers of Kimmeridge clay, chalk, and lias, which formed the cliffs to east or west, and so ate out the two great Dorsetshire bights, which stretch on either side of the central boss at Portland. But just here, the elevating forces had brought the right strata for endurance to the proper angle. At the Bill, the hard layers of Portland stone, capped with their coverlet of Purbeck beds, rise gently from the sea level, and slope inland with an upward rise to near the Verne quarries. Against their solid masses the sea beats in vain; or rather, it works so slowly at its destructive task that ages yet must intervene before the whole of the island is washed away. A little farther north, the Portland sands appear above the high-tide mark; and then the Kimmeridge clay. Where that soft layer fronted the waves, however, mischief was sure to occur; and there, sure enough, the sea cut out a passage for itself between the clay of the island and the clay near Sandsfoot Castle, on the mainland opposite. First it made an isthmus of the connecting bit, and then it wore a channel right across it. Through this channel the sea rushed at last, after centuries of gradual mining, and cut off Portland completely from the mainland, just as the Solent still cuts off the Isle of Wight from the opposite Hampshire coast. If the history of Portland had stopped short

* I purposely omit, as foreign to our present purpose, the complicated changes of level during the pleistocene period.

there, it would have been really what it is still called, an island in fact as well as in name.

But its history did *not* stop short there ; we have now to reckon with the Chesil Bank. For a while, Portland stood out alone in the Channel, a long, sloping mass of barren rock, the one last insulated survivor of the submerged land. But as time rolled on, the sea began to undo its own work, and to make the island a peninsula once more. The problem of the Chesil is a hard one to unfold, but we owe its final solution to Professor Prestwich. It has long been observed that the pebbles are largest at the Portland end ; that they sink to small gravel at Abbotsbury ; and that they give place to sand at Burton Bradstock. It was also satisfactorily shown by Sir John Coode that the individual pebbles are derived from the coast to westward, some of them being identical with the flints from the chalk cliffs near Beer, and others being due to the earlier strata at Budleigh Salterton and at Aylesbeere Hill. But if they came direct from westward, one would naturally expect to find that the biggest pebbles had got as far as Bridport only, that the gravel had reached Abbotsbury, and that sand alone had travelled as far as Portland. Instead of this, we find the exactly opposite state of things. Professor Prestwich, however, has shown that the pebbles are not directly derived from the west, but that they were first piled up on a beach which extended farther to sea than our existing land. This beach was afterwards raised high and dry by some elevating energy ; and a portion of it still exists as a " raised beach " on Portland. As the waves of the newer sea again attacked and demolished the cliffs on which the raised beach rested, they redeposited the hard, siliceous material along the line of the Chesil, carrying the biggest bits only a mile or so to westward, heaping the middle-sized fragments half-way, and rolling the sand as far off as Burton Bradstock.

Why the pebbles should have been deposited here at all is a separate question. It finds an easy answer in the peculiarity of the geological position. The sea would wash away readily enough that part of the Kimmeridge clay which lay above water ; but against that part which lay beneath the level of the surface-waves it was comparatively powerless ; and so a ledge of clay stretched (and still stretches) at a few feet beneath high-tide mark from Portland to the mainland. Along this ledge or reef the shingle washed from the raised beach began to accumulate, and kept on accumulating in a regular curve as the tide and the back-currents drove it gradually westward, till at last it formed a high barrier, uniting Portland with the Abbotsbury coast, and separating the bay on the outside from the Fleet and the Roads on its inner face. Its usual height is about 40 feet ; its thickness, 200 yards. The word Chesil itself is old English for gravel, and the bank is now locally known rather by the modern equivalent of the Pebble Beach. Doubtless, the area of the Fleet has been somewhat widened at a later date by the freshwater drainage from the neighbouring hills.

With this reunion of Portland Island to the mainland by the Chesil Bank, the geological history may be said to close, and the historical history to begin. Yet neither statement is quite literally true; for, on the one hand, the sea and the denuding agencies have since gone on working upon the cliffs and the plateau generally; while, on the other hand, man must have inhabited the island, not only before its reunion with the Dorset coast, but even in all probability before its first severance from the surrounding lands. So far as I know, no palæolithic implements have yet been discovered on Portland to prove the existence of the quaternary black fellows on the site of the island before or during the glacial epoch; but the bones and tusks of mammoths have been found there, and where the mammoth was, the palæolithic hunter probably followed. At the opening of the strictly historical period, however, we may picture Portland to ourselves as a bare wind-swept slope, tilting upward from the Bill to the Verne, and covered from end to end with a thin coating of seaside verdure. Under sea to the south of it, a great submerged bank, now known by the suggestive name of the Shambles, and marked by a warning lightship, continued the general line of upheaval beneath the waves. Between the Shambles and the point where the Portland rocks actually emerge at the Bill, the surging channel of the Race stood out as a perpetual menace to future navigation. That must have been the Portland of the earliest Celtic or Euskarian settlers; a rocky, cliff-bound peninsula, practically islanded by the sea (for who would walk along the ten miles' shingle of the Chesil?), and bare of trees or vegetation, save only the most stunted herbage, gathering thinly over its shallow soil.

Nevertheless, even here the Celtic tribesmen found a home. Around the summit of Verne Hill, before the modern fortifications came to mar its native bleakness, might be traced the double fosse of a prehistoric hill fortress, whither the people of the isle might drive up their women and their other cattle in case of invasion from the hostile Dorset men. Then, and for long ages after, the islanders were a race apart, great slingers of stones after the Balearic and insular fashion, holding little communication with the mainland opposite; but one can easily believe that they were not often attacked, for their isolated position and the great height of their hill fort, together with the steepness of the cliffs on almost every side, must have made their little territory practically impregnable. Unhappily, recent improvements have improved the fosse off the face of the island, and early British Portland now remains without any witness save a few relics preserved by the military authorities in the improvised local museum.

When the Roman came, of course his levelling arm did away at one blow with the independence of the Portlanders. Roads were the instruments by which he broke down local isolation everywhere; and a Roman road led from Cheswell to Verne Hill, which latter point is probably the Vindilis of the Antonine Itinerary. At any rate, the

conquerors certainly had a military station there; for here, as elsewhere, we can notice how the self-same high places serve age after age for the British *dun*, the Roman *castra*, the mediæval castle, and the modern English fort. At the spot called the Grove, on the east side, the excavation for the new fort brought to light a Roman cemetery, where the soldiers of the garrison must have been buried; and a stone sarcophagus, together with some fragments of Samian ware, unearthed on the spot, may still be seen by the inquiring visitor. Near the south end of the island there was another cemetery, where coins, ornaments, and pottery have been discovered. The Roman or provincial population must have been considerable; and the first half of Portland, which still enshrines the Latin word *portus*, shows that the Roads were used even then as a commercial harbour for the produce of the mainland. It is interesting to note, too, that the villages already occupied their present sites, which were pre-ordained by the necessities of the water-supply. Water, indeed, is the great need of the island; for though an abundant source is afforded by the Kimmeridge clay, it is hard digging down to that subjacent stratum. Hence a well is an important thing in Portland, and to this day each hamlet clusters round a single pump, from which all the inhabitants draw their supply. The village names, like Fortune's Well and Southwell, often bear witness to the *raison d'être* of the little group. On the site of both there were Roman settlements, and the first half of the former name sounds suspiciously like a Roman survival.

When the English of Wessex slowly overran the land of the Durotriges, they must have conquered the Portus with the rest of the county; and keeping its old Roman title still intact, they added to it their own word Land, and so formed the modern name of Portland. By that name it is early mentioned in the English Chronicle, at a time when, as I need hardly say, "port" was not yet a naturalised English word for a haven or harbour. It was here, too, at a later date, that the Danes first landed in Wessex, when the King's Reeve at Dorchester rode to them, good easy man, not wotting that they were pirates, and would have driven them to the King's Ham; but they slew him. Throughout the Middle Ages, Portland, then a royal manor, remained a mere open sheep-feeding down; and on it unconscious human selection produced the black-faced breed of sheep who still become famous in their death as Portland mutton. In Norman times, of course it could not escape the castle-building mania. William Rufus chose an isolated crag on the east cliffs of the island, with a natural moat formed by fissures on three sides of it, for the site of a rude but very solid keep, whose ivy-covered ruins still retain the name of Rufus's Castle. The islanders, doubtless largely of Romanised Celtic blood, were also great fishermen, as they are to the present day; and I suppose they were wreckers as well, for the West Bay, the Shambles, and the Race must have supplied them amply with that "devil's providence" which forms proverbially the wrecker's inheritance. In the time of Henry VIII.,

Leland, poor man, in the course of his itinerary over all England, collecting a vast mass of material for a history of its antiquities, which drove him mad at last, gives an account of this agricultural and undesecrated Portland so quaint and characteristic that I shall make no apology for quoting it in full, with a few slight omissions.

Portland (he says) has been of auncient tyme by all likelihod environid with the Se, and yet berith the Name of an Isle. It is eminent and hilly ground on the shore of it, and a great Plain in the middle of it. The Cumpace of it is counted to be about a seven miles; but if a man should cumpace it by the very rootes and depe shore, would mount to a ten miles. The Soil is somewhat stony; and the Shore very rocky. The Isle is fruiteful of corn and gresse, and hath plenty of Sheepe. Ther be at this present tyme about an eighty housis in the Isle. Ther hath been almost as many mo, as it apperith by the ruines. Ther is but one Streat of houses in the Isle; the residew be sparkelid. Ther is a Castelet or Pile not far from Streate, and is set on a high rokke, hard by the Se Cliffes, a little above the Est end of the Chersch. The Paroche Chersch (that is but one at this time in the Isle) is longe and sumwhat low, buiddid in the hanging roots of an hill by the shore. This Chersch and Paroche is about a mile *dim.* to go the next way to it from the Kinges new Castelle in the Isle; and to go to it by cumpace of the shore it is three miles or more. There be very few or utterly no Trees in the Isle saving the Elmes about the Chirch. There wold grow more, if they were ther plantid; yet is the Isle very bleke. The people bring Wood thither out of Wight and other places. They brenne also Cowe-dung dryed with the hete of the sun. The People of the Isle lyve most now by tillage, and sumwhat faulle from fishing. The people be good there in slyngging of stonys, and use it for defence of the Isle. They be politique enough in selling their commodities, and sumwhat avaritiose. The Isle is the Kinges; and much of the land there is holden of hym.

The new castle to which Leland alludes still stands near the landing-place of the Weymouth steamers, and is now used as a modern residence. The islanders also still retain their "avaritiose" character, which is strikingly displayed in the matter of letting lodgings or selling fossils. In other respects, however, Leland's Portland is now utterly a thing of the past. Even as he wrote, the time was beginning to approach when fishing and grazing were no longer to be the mainstay of the local trade. The era of expansion in England generally was setting in; and with the new Italian style of domestic architecture, which was filling London with great houses of the nobility, a demand for good workable freestone began to arise. The line of great palaces which once fringed the river front of the Strand was the visible mark of the change in town; while in the country, mansions like Knowle and Audley End were rapidly taking the place of the gloomy mediæval castle. Now, it is a commonplace of geology that most of the best workable building-stone in England comes from the oolitic strata, midway in hardness as they are between the very solid igneous rocks or the very compressed primary deposits, on the one hand, and the loose texture of the chalk and the tertiary sandstones, on the other. And among these oolitic stones there is none better than that of the Portland beds, which actually come to the surface at the Verne quarries. How early the virtues of Portland stone began to be

noised abroad I do not know, but certainly as early as the days of James I. it was chosen by Inigo Jones for his great work of the Banqueting Hall at Whitehall, as well as for many of his chief architectural defacements on ancient abbeys and castles. From that time forth, it has been employed for almost all our greatest public buildings. Wren, who was member for Weymouth, showed his gratitude by using up the island to build St. Paul's. Goldsmiths' Hall, the Reform Club, and Pall Mall generally, all represent isolated bits of poor dilapidated Portland; while other fractions of it are now scattered over every part of England, especially wherever water carriage is possible.

The quarrying necessitated by these immense works has laid bare a vast portion of the plateau. As long ago as 1839, the annual consumption amounted to one acre of good stone; and ever since that time the quarrymen and the tramways have been busily removing the remainder of the merchantable crust. Then, to complete the destruction, came the establishment of the prison, with its consequence the Breakwater. This important work was begun in 1847, and it consists of two great arms. One of them is connected with the mainland, and runs out to sea for about 1,800 feet; then an opening is left for ships, 400 feet wide; and beyond this stretches the main breakwater, 6,000 feet long. Many other piers or barriers elsewhere are built of Portland stone; so that the island, itself with the Chesil Bank a great breakwater for Portland Roads, has been broken up not only to afford more security to its own harbour, but also to produce other new harbours elsewhere. Last of all came the Verne fortifications to complete the havoc; so that at the present day Portland, naturally bleak and barren by its very situation, has developed into the most sullen, gloomy, woe-begone, and desolate spot even in our modern desecrated and industrialised England.

Of course our own century is good for nothing if not for communications; and so the visitor can get easily enough to Portland now by land or water. The railway from Weymouth has long broken down the isolation of the place; a road at its side crosses the Smallmouth or exit of the Fleet by a bridge; and steamers ply to and fro many times daily. The islanders have ceased to be a race apart, and have been largely reinforced by intrusive "foreigners" from the Dorset main. As you pass across in one of the little steamboats, you see in front of you the high, blunt end of the island, one mass of *débris*, and the breakwater stretching its long, gaunt arms across the mouth of the Roads. To the left, the long range of the Dorset downs stretches away past Lulworth and the Isle of Purbeck to St. Aldhelm's Head; to the right, the Chesil Bank bounds the view over the great West Bay. As you land, you pass by Henry VIII.'s "new castelle," a low block-house with little picturesqueness, surrounded by some of the few trees in the island, under shelter of the neighbouring Chesil. Making for the summit of the great beach, you see the whole long curve of its course towards the Abbotsbury hills, and observe the curious contour of its own formation.

On the land side, here represented by the Roads, it is a steep pull to the top; looking seaward into the West Bay, the bank descends first to a sort of deep fosse or round-bottomed trough, and then rises again into a minor outer barrier, whence it falls sheer and precipitous into the waves of the bay. This arrangement is continued for miles in a long parallel arch, with all the regularity of a human military work. It results, of course, from the action of the sea, the breakers pitching over first into the hollow trough, and then dragging back some of the pebbles with the undertow to form the outer barrier. In very great storms the billows rise above the main ridge itself, and shower a perfect cannonade of shingle on to the far side. Close in to shore the water is very deep, for the bank does not shelve, but dips suddenly into the hollow of the channel. Hence the spot is a very dangerous one for ships. If driven up here before the wind, vessel and men are dashed helplessly against the shingle; and it is impossible for the sailors to get foothold or to clutch at any fixed thing in the midst of the infinite flux of waves and pebbles. Seafaring folk know the place by the suggestive name of Deadman's Bay. There is only one little cove, close under the cliffs of Portland, where the shore shelves slightly, and where it is possible to ground a vessel while the men swim for their lives. During very heavy weather, the recoil of the waves sometimes lays bare for a time the blue substratum of Kimmeridge clay on which the shingle has accumulated.

From the Chesil, a road leads up the face of the hill to the summit of the plateau, passing through the stony-looking modern villages of Chesilton and Fortune's Well. Near the top a panorama opens over sea and land, disclosing the whole curve of the shingle beach, the zig-zagging coast-line of the Fleet within it, and the two seas in Portland Roads and in the West Bay. The plateau itself, at the north end at least, is one gloomy scene of utter desolation; no green anywhere; all the prospect is of stone, stony. First come the great batteries of Fort Victoria; and beyond them lies the area which the convicts are slowly engaged in levelling off to allow a free sweep for the charges from its big guns. On every side the ground is covered by trams full of stone, or littered with slate and rubbish from the top beds and the refuse of the quarries. The main road down the centre of the island leads through two or three more stony hamlets, for wood is an almost unknown luxury, to the great, gaunt, unfinished stone church of St. George's—an eighteenth century effort of the darkest type. This, the later parish church of the island, replaces Leland's building on the east shore, ruined by a landslip at a spot which still bears the name of Church Hope. Quarries on either hand lie sunk deep into the roots of the island, and between them the road runs on a sort of artificial isthmus left by the excavations on either hand. The very ornaments and curiosities are of stone—a petrified tree fixed up against the side of a cottage, or a set of ammonites worked fantastically into a garden wall, if that be a garden which has no living thing within it. Dust and grit are the prevailing

elements ; no trees, no greenery, no life, save that of grimy convicts and equally grimy quarrymen. Beyond all, the grey channel, and the white lines that mark the Race or the sunken bank of the Shambles.

Towards the south end, the scenery (if you can call it such) improves a little ; for here, at least, one can see Portland in its original bleakness and blankness, before its bowels were ruthlessly rifled by the hand of man. A sprinkling of cultivation begins to appear, and there is a good deal of land down in sheep grazing. The place of hedges is taken by stone walls, built of the upper slaty bed of the Purbeck ; while instead of gates the unsophisticated islander leaves a gap in the wall, which he fills in loosely with round boulders, removing and replacing them by hand to admit the sheep or the farmer's cart. The fields are all long and narrow rectangles, so as to afford the maximum of shelter from the wind to the cowering flock. At the southern extremity the cliffs grow lower, but bolder ; for here the Portland stone itself is exposed to the full fury of the sea. Many caverns are hollowed out of the naked rock, through one of which, worn into a blowhole, the sea spouts with a noise like an explosion. Two lighthouses warn vessels off the dangers of the Bill, and with the lightship on the Shambles help to guard the narrow passage of the Race. Among the scanty herbage of this southern point the black-faced ewes still find a congenial pabulum, and in the fields the old indigenous flora—including the Portland spurge and other rarer plants—still manages to drag on feebly a precarious existence.

There is just one point on the island, however, which has succeeded in attaining something like beauty and romance of situation. Midway along the east shore, where the soft Kimmeridge clay underlying the Portland beds is exposed to the lapping of the Channel waves, a series of founders or landslips, caused by the undermining of the solid strata, has tossed about the superincumbent rocks into a tangled undercliff of rugged fragments. Here, by the little cove of Church Hope, a narrow lane leads to the ivy-covered keep of Rufus's Castle, still perched upon its moated crag ; while beyond it, from the edge of the cliff, you look down over the slight remains of the old church, backed by a long line of tumbled and lichen-grown masses. A few trees, under shelter of the chine (descendants perhaps of Leland's elms), form a pretty background of verdure, in the midst of which rise the modern battlements of Pennsylvania Castle, built by a great-grandson of William Penn, and justifying its name by its possession of the one grove that Portland can boast of. From this solitary oasis the cliff-path leads back through the prison precincts, and you find yourself once more in the desolate *Petræa* of the island. That is, in brief, a picture of the Portland that now is ; and that, in still briefer outline, is the past history which has led to its being so.



RACHEL AND WILL CAME TO THE DOOR.

W. SMITH & CO. LONDON.

Damocles.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "FOR PERCIVAL."

CHAPTER XX.

EFFIE AT HOME.



THAT same evening Rachel, wrapped in a white shawl, was leaning on the balcony, looking out. Behind her was the lighted room, and Laura's figure at the piano, swaying a little as she played. Outside the sea was dusky and wide, and, in the dim light, only the onward movement of the water was visible. It was ridged yet not rough, glassy and dark, breaking softly at some distance from the shore, in pale ripples of foam. One would have said that the

vast bulk of ocean, driven landward by some sombre and concentrated impulse, was instinct with stealthy life.

Young Lauriston Brett came out, and she made way for him. To her thoughts, preoccupied with another presence, he looked very slim and boyish as he stood by her side, softly whistling an accompaniment to his cousin's playing. Laura, having exhausted the flatness of the place in her humorous descriptions, was now expressing its dreariness in melancholy music, more suitable to those dusky level shores than she herself quite realised. Dick stopped his whistling as Rachel looked up. The light from within fell on her face, her eyes seemed to have something of the shadowy mystery of the deep in them.

"Don't you like this?" she said. "Does not the sea seem boundless? And how small and shrunken the coast is! Doesn't it look as if the water were coming on and on to take us unawares? Listen to the soft, rushing

noise it makes on the shingle and sand. Those black waves are flowing over all Will's walls and mounds; they are gone, you couldn't find a trace of them. Poor Will, how hard he worked! Don't you feel as if the tide might rise a little higher, and put out that row of twinkling gaslights, and pour over these toy houses of ours just as easily?"

"And sweep us all away, holidaymakers and shopkeepers, parson and clerk, and vestry and town crier," said Dick. "It looks like it, but I don't think it will."

"No, I don't think it will, to-night. But some day when the darkness comes." She paused, laughing a little. "Do you know," she said, "I have a fancy that haunts me. I think of all the shadows and mystery in the world, all that is terrible, and wonderful, and unknown, as a great tide which ebbs and flows. Sometimes it shrinks into the distance, as the sea did this afternoon, till it is nothing but a far-away line, and the busy commonplace life is everywhere, so that one cannot escape from it. And at other times it comes rolling in, in great unfathomable waves of darkness, till Life seems like a little island in infinite space, and one is dizzy with wonder and awe. And so it ebbs and flows; but some day it will rise just a little higher, and my tiny spark of fire at its edge will be quenched in an instant."

She spoke very softly, as she nearly always did, but it was the softness of a voice which had strength and fulness behind it.

"I think I understand," said Dick. "Do you feel like that to-night?"

"Not especially. But the sea to-night is like the picture of my dream."

They were silent, listening to the silver notes of Laura's music, and watching the long, rolling waves which in the distance were not to be distinguished from the gloom of the cloud-hung sky. Presently Rachel said, "I have a right to be melancholy this evening. I have promised to destroy a remembrance—an illusion I suppose it is—with my eyes open. I am going to spoil the prettiest memory I possess."

Dick had arrived at the point when one is apt to be greatly impressed by the loss of illusions, as a solemn and poetical fact. (This state of mind serves as evidence of growing old till one ceases to be so much impressed, when it may perhaps bear a different meaning.) It was natural, therefore, that he should exclaim, "But that is murder!"

"Hardly," said Rachel. "There is so little life left in it now! When one suspects that a memory can be spoiled, it is done—almost!"

"But not quite."

"Not quite, perhaps. I had a schoolgirl friend, and I had only one. We have been parted for years, utterly parted, without so much as a word or a sign, and I have kept her in my heart all the time. And now we are going to meet, and I feel as if the real parting would be then. It is very foolish; but I think not quite so foolish as it sounds, for I have loved her as she was, and I feel that we must both be changed. I think I even understand what the change in her must be, and how it will disturb the little picture that has been so dear to me."

"That's like Alfred de Musset. Do you recollect how he went to his friends' door, and then turned back and never saw them again, because he was afraid he might brush the bloom off his remembrance of them? It's true," said Dick thoughtfully, "that if one kept away from the people one had liked because one *had* liked them, and from the people one hadn't liked because one *hadn't* liked them, it would limit the number of one's acquaintances. Still, if you feel like that, why don't you run away from your friend?"

"On the contrary, I must run to her. She is poor and in difficulties; and if I stay away, what will she think of me?"

"Oh! it's a question of destroying her ideal or your own. There is no other alternative? Then, of course, being what you are, you must go."

"What am I?"

"May I say it?" asked Dick, colouring with boyish shyness and enthusiasm. "Too true a woman not to have a passion for self-sacrifice."

He would not have ventured on such a speech with Laura at hand, but Rachel only smiled.

"After that," she said, "I shall go if only to keep up my character."

"Before you go to Redlands?"

"Yes. We shall be in town for a few days. I shall go then."

"Perhaps it will be better than you think."

"Perhaps it will," she answered in a lifeless tone which rather conveyed, "I fear it may be worse." Dick could not know how dead that past was to her.

"Look here," he said after a pause; "I shall be going home while you are at Redlands. I shall pass the station, it is only an hour's walk; may I come and call on you and Will?"

"Do," she answered cordially. "You won't find anybody else, you know; Laura won't be there. We are going to have it all to ourselves, Will and I—and the picture!" she added with a sudden thought. "I shall make acquaintance with that before I see you."

"You are wonderfully interested in that picture," said Dick. "Well, it is very beautiful." He stood caressing his chin, and drawing down his brows in an inward, meditative gaze. Then he looked at Rachel. He was evidently setting the two faces side by side. "What do you expect?" he said at last.

"A great deal. Besides, it is not only for the sake of her beauty——"

"Because she was Will's mother?"

Rachel's eyes were fixed on the black water. "Exactly so," she said. "Because she was Will's mother. There are some things I fancy I might understand better if I knew her. Oh, it is a foolish whim, no doubt, but I want to stand face to face with that picture."

"It doesn't speak, you know," said Dick with an air of laughing simplicity.

"Doesn't it? Not to you, perhaps. Men want things said so very plainly. But we women understand each other sometimes."

"Well," said he, "when I come to Redlands you must tell me what the beautiful shepherdess has said to you."

The music stopped. "Come in! come in!" cried Mrs. Latham from the yellow lighted room. "It is getting quite chilly, and I have been sitting in a draught playing all the melancholy things I could think of, till I am absolutely shuddering. Come in and shut the window, and you shall have something cheerful—one of Dick's comic songs if he likes."

The two figures stepped in from the balcony. She suffered her long white shawl to slip downward from her throat, while he paused behind her to shut out the eternal sea and sky. "But your music has been perfect," said Rachel. "It has just suited the place, and this mournful evening."

"That's exactly what I intended," Laura answered with a shiver. "But Dick can suit the place too, if he likes to sing flat, as he very often does!"

They left Salthaven about a fortnight later, taking with them a store of shells, seaweed, and pebbles, some sea-anemones, five crabs, a shrimp, and a sunburnt little Will with spade and pail, in a red cap, "just like what the life-boat men wear." Will had an idea that when he grew up he would perhaps be a life-boat man, and he rescued Rachel several times in the railway carriage, till he had exhausted his notion of the possibilities of such a career. Then, lapsing into vice, he rode furiously on one of the divisions of the seat, and robbed her, escaping triumphantly with immense treasures which he concealed in the net above his head.

Rachel went to see Effie during the few days which they spent in town. "3, Acacia Villas, Alexandra Road, N." was the address which Charley had written on the back of one of his own cards. She drove out to it one sunny afternoon. Her way lay through a wilderness of small, pretentious streets, where people seemed to note the carriage, the sleek, shining horses, and the solitary figure seated behind them. Rachel, though she looked before her with a musing gaze, was conscious of the general air of meagre gentility, and resented it on Effie's behalf. It was hard that Effie's longings for wealth and splendour should have ended in a little stuccoed street in a shabby suburb, and Rachel feared that other things had ended at least as shabbily. A cold light from the outside fell on her memory of Effie's quaint, sweet, coquettish ways, the outspoken sincerity of her shallowness, and her pretty little half-childish familiarities of speech and manner. Rachel vaguely recalled the Willies and Reggies, Freds, Franks, and Jacks, who were always hanging about Effie, and who figured very prominently in her conversation. These flirtations were not serious; Effie was clear-sighted and not easily touched, but the thought of them displeased Rachel. Flirtations are too like such slight tenements as those she was passing on her way to Alexandra Road. Time cannot mellow or ennoble them; they are flimsy and in bad taste

from the first, and they make detestable ruins. She had not been hard upon Effie in those blossoming days of spring. There is a bright innocence about seed time whatever the sown seed may be. But as she went her way that afternoon, she said to herself that her best hope was that the five years might have changed Effie as little as possible.

3, Acacia Villas was reached at last, and the door was opened by a little maid who had evidently been drilled and smartened for the occasion, and who asked Miss Conway to walk into the drawing-room. It was a poor little room, adorned with a good deal of fancy work which did not disguise the cheapness of the furniture. Rachel, stooping over a shabby but very ornamental little table, to look at an album of photographs, was curiously unlike her surroundings—a contrast which was drolly repeated in the gilt glass over the chimney-piece. She had just discovered a photograph of Fanny, with her hair very elaborately arranged, bending over a mass of frills and embroidery which had its mouth open and its eyes shut, when Effie flew in, caught her round the neck, and welcomed her with shrill little silvery cries, punctuated with kisses. “At last! At last! Oh, you dear, dear Rachel! Isn’t it ages, centuries, an eternity since we met? Algy is coming in directly; I want you to know Algy. Oh, why did things ever go wrong, so that I haven’t had you all these years! But we didn’t understand; we thought you had given up Charley for Mr. Lauriston. I was obliged to stand by Charley, you know. Oh, I do wish you had married Charley; you were so fond of each other, weren’t you? And I think that’s nonsense about the madness. But it was just like you to be so conscientious; we ought to have known that. You always were so strong-minded. I couldn’t have given up Algy if all his relations, and mine too, had been raging lunatics shut up in asylums. I can’t think how you gave up Charley. Poor fellow! He was awfully cut up. Bessy is very nice. She is Reggie Maxwell’s cousin. Don’t you remember Reggie Maxwell? Charley went to stay there, and it was settled all in a hurry. She is very nice, but she isn’t a bit like you. I feel as if you ought to have been my sister; it is so much the nicest when people marry their first loves. Charley told me you were coming to see me before you wrote to say so. He gave you Fanny’s address too, didn’t he? But I knew you would come to me first.”

“Dear Effie, of course I should come to you first.”

“Yes, I knew it.” Effie renewed her kisses, and then threw her head back to look at Rachel. “You are changed,” she said; “or is it that everybody else is changed, and that you are just the same? Perhaps that is it. Oh, I did want you so when first I was engaged to Algy! It would have been so nice to tell you everything. I didn’t care about telling Fanny; besides she was always wanting to talk about John Pemberton. He is very nice, of course, but I got so dreadfully tired of hearing about him, and how he was going to furnish the drawing-room and the dining-room, and what plate he had got, and what stair-carpets

he liked, and where they were going to put the piano, and what he said about everything. Can't you fancy how tiresome it was?"

"I think perhaps I can," said Rachel frankly. She did not feel as if she could have taken a keen interest in Fanny's love affairs. "And you had something else to think about."

"Yes—Algy," said Effie, with a little pause before the name. Her bright eyes, her quaint little face shone with tender feeling. Rachel began to feel that the illusion was not destroyed. Was it possible that it was a reality? "I do want you to see Algy," Effie continued. "He is coming almost directly, but he thought I should like a talk with you first. Algy always thinks of everything." She was holding and softly stroking Rachel's ungloved hand. "Oh!" she said suddenly, "where have I seen that ring? It used not to be yours. No; it was Mr. Lauriston's. I remember it when I was little."

The thought that Effie's caressing fingers had touched that ring on Adam Lauriston's hand, as they touched it now on hers, sent a thrill through Rachel.

"Did he leave it to you?" Effie asked. "And you have got his boy living with you. Charley told me. Is he going to stay always?"

"He gave it to me," Rachel answered, looking downward at her hand. "And I am Will's guardian till he comes of age, you know."

"You liked him, didn't you?" said Effie. "But not as you liked Charley. I know that now, and we ought to have known it before. Charley was your first love, just as Algy was mine—only how could you ever give him up? You liked Mr. Lauriston differently, didn't you?"

"Very differently," said Rachel, with an absolute openness which masked her scorn of Charley and herself. She could speak of Adam Lauriston with perfect self-control, since no words concerning his relation to her had ever pierced to the truth where it lay hidden.

"And you are going to Redlands?" Effie went on. "How long it is since we were there together! Do you remember that evening when Mr. Lauriston came to dine with us? I suppose it would all have been just the same if he hadn't, but I used not to think so. I fancied that evening was the beginning of all our trouble."

"No," said Rachel absently. A curious sensation of blankness stole over her at the thought of the past with Adam Lauriston's name struck out.

"No, I suppose not," Effie repeated. "More than five years ago, isn't it? Do tell me, Rachel dear, am I much changed? You can see better than I can. I look and look till I don't know; but I must look older. Fanny looks older; she is quite stout. Of course I must look older," she persisted with a little sigh and a wistful upward glance. Lapse of time to a butterfly can only mean dimmed colours, and weak, rain-beaten wings; but how pathetic it would be if the butterflies could find out that truth! Effie understood it instinctively, and if she were more than a butterfly she did not know it.

"Let me look at you," said Rachel smiling. Her clear gaze rested on the other's features, questioning, studying, reading with embracing tenderness. At the first glance it seemed to her that time had hardly touched the pretty parted lips, the soft cheeks, the wide childish eyes, the low white forehead with the little ripples of bright hair about it. Yet as she looked she saw that there was a change; a little of the softness, the prettiness, the childishness was gone. But, still looking, it seemed to Rachel that she saw something in the upturned face which more than made amends.

"I do look older, don't I?" Effie insisted. "Oh, why must people grow old?"

"I don't think you need trouble yourself yet," said Rachel caressingly. "If you are changed a little——"

As she spoke the door opened, and Algy appeared on the threshold. He was fair, but not with Effie's radiant fairness; his features were regular and pale, and his blindness gave a vague melancholy to his expression. There was something dim and colourless about the young fellow who paused in the doorway, with a hand weakly extended, almost as if he were groping for his lost sight, rather than actually feeling his way.

"Algy!" cried Effie, and darted to meet him. At her voice and touch he drew himself up, stepped forward fearlessly, and brightened as if he were suddenly bathed in a flood of golden sunshine. Rachel rose as they approached her, a delicate, dainty couple in the midst of their shabby surroundings. She gathered Algy's groping fingers into her friendly clasp, and for a moment she saw the two blonde heads in a bright uncertainty. Effie's happiness, Algy's misfortune, filled her eyes with those tender tears.

She longed to do something for them. She would have liked to set them down in some trim little paradise as dainty as themselves—a little paradise of sunshine and leafy shadows, of sweet blossoms and singing birds—and then? Then there would be nothing for her to do but to steal softly away and leave them to their love. She perceived that they had no need of her, and no sympathy with her. Her sadness might be deep as the grave, but she need never fear that it would overshadow their lives. Her touch could not chill them. They were safe, and in their bright security she recognised Effie's candid, childlike selfishness transformed into love.

The only thing that puzzled Rachel as she drove away that afternoon was that Algy should have won this passionate devotion from the vain little coquette. If he had been a strong and masterful man—but he was gentle, irresolute, with just a dash of not very original poetry in him, by no means the husband, one would have said, to rule a bright, wilful girl who loved admiration. In truth Algy's blindness had been his talisman. Effie might have flirted, would have flirted, in her old fashion, but for that. She would have considered that a man with his eyes in his head

could take care of himself, however incapable of doing so he might really have been. She would have ruled a yielding nature; but downright blindness was another thing, and appealed to a sense of honour which was real, though the chord would not vibrate to a delicate touch. She would never flirt, she would never have any fun with any man while Algy sat by in the dark and could not see. It was horrid, but she wouldn't. She would read him every syllable of every letter she received. She would tell him everything. It would be mean to do the least thing he would not like. She began with an outbreak of petulant conscientiousness, and ended by finding happiness in her self-sacrifice.

She even dressed for Algy only. She had to be very economical, but she delighted in clever contrivances with inexpensive materials. That very day, before Rachel came, she had flown to him, had taken his hand and drawn it gently down her sleeve. "Do you feel how soft it is, Algy? And all puffed—no, higher up—that's the new-fashioned shape. Do you know what it looks like? Feel all round—I want you to know—I think it's a love of a sleeve. And the stuff's pretty, too—a sort of mixy brown, with a dash of gold colour in it, and mother gave me some satin to do it up with. Oh, how am I to tell you what sort of brown it is? It's a brown that looks as if it had sunshine on it; it's awfully pretty; it seems just to go right with my hair. Oh, Algy, can't you fancy what sort of brown would go with my hair? You haven't forgotten what my hair is like, have you?"

"No, no," said Algy, "I'm not going to forget that;" and he touched the wavy locks with his lips.

"No, you mustn't forget," said Effie, laying her cheek on his shoulder. "Do you remember what dress I had when I saw you first?"

"Yes; a pretty pale blue thing with a lot of ribbons and lace. I remember it."

"Oh, that's good of you! And when we went to Mrs. Gordon's party, and I sat on the stairs with you, and mamma was so cross?"

Algy considered. "Well, it was partly white and partly gold colour, wasn't it? I know I thought it suited you perfectly."

"No? Oh, Algy! Did you? Yes, that's right. It is nice of you to remember my old dresses. Now I can say 'a little lighter' or 'a shade darker,' and you'll know exactly what I look like, won't you?"

But after Rachel had gone she clung to Algy's arm, and hid her face against him. "Oh, Algy!" she murmured reluctantly, "there's one thing I *must* say. I've been looking in the glass, and, Algy, I do think—I'm afraid—I look a little bit older. I asked Rachel to-day. She always tells the truth, and she said, 'Well, if you are changed a little——' and just at that minute you came in. So you see she couldn't say I wasn't. I'm afraid you might think I didn't look quite as nice. Not wrinkled, you know; and my hair's just as nice as ever; I'm not getting bald, or grey, or anything. I fancy I'm just the same by candlelight, but I think that perhaps by daylight I look not quite so young. Algy, I

must tell you because you can't see. You mustn't think it's much, but you mustn't think it isn't anything at all, because I'm nearly sure—I mean I'm sure it is. Can you fancy me looking a little bit old, dear?"

"No, never!" said Algy, "and never shall."

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PICTURE SPEAKS.

Well, let my saddest thoughts be true, and yet
 Although "The End" be written on the scroll,
 My very grief shall be my amulet—
 Let me but keep for ever in my soul
 The memory of the days when you drew breath,
 The living memory of the life you led,
 And death shall deaden all the pains of death—
 I shall pass onward, saying to my dead,
 "Since you have lived your lifetime, live will I—
 Since you have died, I am content to die."

Never glad
 Was he with sweetness of his lady's eyes,
 Nor joy he had.

DICK went through Redlands Park, under a cloudless sky, with all manner of golden lights and wavering shadows falling across his path. The breeze was so faint that it hardly stirred the innumerable fronds of bracken, and he was conscious as he walked of a sultry stillness, which yet seemed to hold the soft persistent humming of life everywhere around him. He loved the place, and it seemed home-like and pleasant to be strolling there, as in old days, when his cousin was master. The sunlight, flooding every nook with warmth and brightness, effaced the cold shadow of the funeral procession which had passed that way in April, and revived the memory of bygone summers. As he turned a clump of trees and saw the Hall before him, with its wide drive, its sweeping cedars, and its terraced borders, tracing lines of flame-colour and scarlet on the smooth green turf, it was hard to realise that the soul of that mass of building was no longer Adam Lauriston, but Rachel Conway.

Even to his partial eyes the Hall itself was not precisely beautiful. With all the charm of early association it could not be other than the elegant modern mansion of the county handbook. Yet its picturesque site, its size, and its air of opulent comfort and completeness, gave it a certain stateliness of its own, and suggested that life within its precincts must be dignified and ample. Time had done what it could, permitting the judiciously planted forest trees to merit the description by ceasing to recall it, and softening the obtrusive newness of the house itself. In fact, it was already a little old-fashioned, and Dick as he walked declared

to himself that, since the old Hall was gone, he preferred the present one to some erection of yesterday in the rawest of red brick.

Being informed that Miss Conway was in the garden he determined to go in search of her himself, and struck across an expanse of shaven lawn, in what he thought a probable direction. Contradictory information from different gardeners sent him wandering through a maze of stately walks, where shrubs and plants were sunning themselves in ordered rows, and vases, aloft against the cloudless sky, overflowed with vivid blossoms. From thence he passed to wilder and leafier coverts, where the gravel path was time-stained, and touched with moss, and where, though Dick did not know it, Adam and Rachel had once stood together in the time of lilies. Two or three minutes more brought him, through a green arch, to the pool of the old story.

It lay as he remembered it, partially overgrown with water-weeds, and with the dragon-flies darting over its surface. A ring of trees, standing at a little distance from its brink, made twilight earlier there than elsewhere; but when he found his way there, the sun in its midday brightness was upon it, and the quivering water gave back its shining glances, and hid a sombre depth. Yet Dick, pausing, perceived a change. A fence enclosed it, carefully designed to harmonise as far as might be with the surroundings, but strong and new, so new that, stepping forward, he picked up a tiny chip of freshly cut wood upon the grass.

Dick leaned on the railings, folded his arms, and looked down upon the pool. And there in the hot noonday silence he very nearly saw a ghost. The thought of the child who had died there touched him with its pathos, till the little face seemed to swim up to the surface, and for lack of any certainty of shape, became a dim, drowned likeness of little Will. And then, passing in thought to the lonely woman who had come and gone, with such weary pacing, in the walk hard by, Dick idly tried to see her also in the inscrutable mirror at his feet, and suddenly had a vision of Rachel's face, blighted and pale, with such a look of hungry misery in its eyes that he recoiled in horror. He said to himself the next moment that it was natural that the thought of Rachel's agony should follow the fancy of Will's drowned lips and eyes, but, nevertheless, he turned away with a shiver as if the place were haunted. If Redlands had been Paradise itself, he felt that one such actual glimpse of Rachel would have made a hell of it for ever, and his heart gave a great bounding throb of relief as he remembered that his inheritance lay in the outer world, among his fellow-men. Still, while he walked slowly up the Yew Walk, he could not altogether thrust aside the horror of that momentary fancy, somewhat akin to the earlier shadow which hung over the place as a phantom or a doubt.

A white hand beckoned him from behind the evergreen growth, and Rachel Conway, flushed a little, bright-eyed, with curved and parted lips, looked out and made a sign of silence. Dick, amazed, suffered himself to be drawn into a little recess. "Hide and seek," said Rachel in a

laughing whisper. "I'm bound to hide somewhere in this walk. Will will be here in a moment. How did you come here? You are early, are you not?" She looked at her watch and arched her brows. "Oh, I had no idea it was so late!"

"I've had a game of hide and seek, too, all round the garden," he whispered back. "No, don't be sorry, since I've found you—no, you found me!"

"We meant to have been ready to receive you, Will and I. Hush! I hear him."

Her ears were quicker than young Brett's, who was not listening so eagerly. There was a pause, and as they stood together, shoulder to shoulder, in the warm green shadow, which was full of the smell of growing leaves and flowers, he turned a little and looked at her. She was leaning slightly forward, and the yew hedge of Mr. Lauriston's old story was the background for her beautiful, unconscious face. She waited radiant and intent, without the slightest movement, as if she had been steeped in the warm, peaceful life around her. He would have liked to say, "You are happy now?" but he dared not speak; he drew back a little lest he should touch her as they stood; he was almost afraid even to look at her lest that shy, swift-winged happiness should take flight. Dick partly understood what Adam Lauriston had known with such poignant certainty, that there was a charmed circle round Rachel, and that those who longed to help her, passing within it, were transformed to the very shape of her sadness, so that they carried its quickened memory instead of the sympathy with which they set forth. The nearer to her heart the deeper the shadow. Only the little child could cross the line with the sunshine on his face.

Dick turned away his head and looked out at the Yew Walk. A couple of white butterflies flickered lightly over the grassy floor; he followed them with his eyes, and all at once he saw Will coming down the wide green way, with his head thrown back, hesitating, listening, questioning the leafy walls with an eager glance. He stopped short just before he came to their hiding-place and gazed thoughtfully round. It was strange to look at the little, lonely figure pausing on the sunlit turf, with his tiny black shadow huddled at his feet, and to think that he was master and owner of the ground on which he stood, and of the trees which lifted their great limbs against the hot blue overhead. Such a solitary little master as he looked!

But all at once, though Rachel made no sign, he turned and came towards them where they watched him, as if he were drawn by her desire, doubtfully at first, so that his halting step was very noticeable, and then more quickly, ending at last with a run, and a sudden illumination of his face as he spied them. "I've found you!" he exclaimed. "Oh, and Dicky, too! Dicky, too!" And he caught their hands and swung them to and fro in his warm, childish clasp.

"He looks well, doesn't he?" said Rachel.

"Capital—hasn't lost his Salthaven colour, have you, old fellow?" And Dick lifted him in his strong arms. "Why, what a pretty red rosebud you've got there!"

"You may have it," said Will generously.

"No, no, don't give it to me; you should give flowers to ladies, you know. Ask Miss Conway if she will have it."

Will shook his head. "Not a rose," he said. "That's not the flower she likes."

"No?" said Dick, with a quick glance at Rachel. "Does she like only one then?"

"She likes one best."

"Get me a bit, Will," said Miss Conway. "A dark bit, you know, and I'll wear it."

Will went off at full speed with an air of mystery, and the others strolled up the walk towards the house. "Do you know, said Rachel, abruptly. "whether Mr. Goodwin has arranged anything with Mrs. Clarke?"

"Young Goodwin has gone over—you know that?"

"Yes. I was glad he was able to go. If I had been a man of business, and if it hadn't been for Will, I should have liked to go myself. I felt as if some one ought to try to carry out his last wish."

"Yes," said Dick. "He liked her the best of his sisters. I haven't heard anything more from Goodwin," he added, after a pause.

"I wrote to her, but I have had no answer yet; there hasn't been much time. Well, as long as I live if I can help her in any way I will," said Rachel, in her earnest voice, and walked on musingly. Life seemed very full of claims and duties since Lauriston's death. There was his boy, there was this unlucky sister of his, and there were Algy and Effie—poor little pair of love-birds! She flushed at the remembrance of the help given in secret to Charley. Perhaps he had helped little Effie as secretly. And there was Dick to be counselled and urged onward. She longed to fill Lauriston's place to others; she knew that no one could fill it to herself.

She turned to the young fellow at her side, and began to question him about his prospects. While he was eagerly explaining his plans for the future, Will returned, stripping the leaves from the stiff stem which he carried. "Here's her favourite flower!" he proclaimed, at the top of his voice. "Isn't it your favourite of all?"

"Yes," said Rachel, taking it from him and showing it to Dick. "I like my sweet William best, don't I?"

Dick laughed and so did she; but when Will had run on to be made ready for his dinner, he looked at her as she fastened the cluster of deep-coloured blossoms in her black dress. "It is not the most convenient flower to arrange," she owned candidly. "And Will always picks the biggest heads—my sweet William."

"Give me a little bit," said young Brett. "I'm partly his guardian too—let me wear Will's colours."

They waited in the library till luncheon should be announced. The young man found it strange to see Rachel moving to and fro in the big melancholy room, a bit of silk embroidery lying on Lauriston's writing-table, a pair of long gloves tossed carelessly on the arm-chair by the hearth, and some of Will's toys scattered over the floor. "Do you generally sit in this room?" he asked.

"Yes. It looks like it, doesn't it?" she said, following the direction of his eyes. "Will should have put his things away, but we went out in a hurry. This is rather an eventful day for him; first, your coming this morning, and this afternoon he is to have a visitor, and afterwards I have promised he shall go to Bucksmill Hill. Do you remember the moor there? He has a great wish to go to it. I don't know what he expects, I'm sure. At any rate I promised we would drive there later when the sun is not quite so powerful. There is no shade there, of course."

"No," said Dick; "but it will be pleasant in the cool of the evening. I like that bit of moorland; one feels free there. And who may Will's visitor be?"

"Will you be any wiser if I tell you it is Mrs. Bates?"

"Not a bit. Mrs. Bates? No, I don't know her."

"She was an old servant of his mother's, and she has come to Redlands, I believe, on purpose to see him. She is only staying in the village till this evening, so she is to call early in the afternoon. By the way, I meant to have told you that you were right and I was wrong."

"How so?"

"You told me the picture wouldn't speak, but I thought perhaps it would."

He turned quickly and looked up at the Arcadian shepherdess. "And it doesn't?"

"No, it doesn't. You were quite right."

The shepherdess smiled down upon them as they gazed at her. Rachel hesitated, glanced at her companion, and then went on. "And you were right, too, in saying that she was very beautiful."

"Isn't she?" he exclaimed enthusiastically.

"Yes, more beautiful even than I expected. But, tell me, do you *like* her face?"

"Why, yes!" He was startled.

"Yes," she repeated. "You like it, and he—worshipped her! And I am more grateful to her than words can say; grateful to her for her Will—my Will—grateful to her for *his* happiness. I think he had very little in his life but what she gave him; he was not a man who could be made happy by little things. And yet ——"

"You don't like her?" said Dick, looking from Rachel to Arcadia and back again.

She coloured hotly. "I don't know. I thought it was just pos-

sible you might understand, but I see you don't. The fact is, I don't understand either. She perplexes me. I feel sometimes as if she were laughing at me. It doesn't matter. Ah, here is Will, and luncheon is waiting."

Dick, as he followed her out of the room, looked back at the picture. Was there, in truth, a touch of mockery on those perfect lips? No; he could see nothing beyond their unchanging sweetness.

Rachel and Will came to the door when Dick drove off to the station, and waved their smiling farewells. He looked back with answering signs till he reached a curve in the road which hid him from their sight. Will was not inclined to indulge in emotions of regret and pensive remembrance, so the moment Dick vanished he pocketed his small handkerchief, announced that he was going upstairs to play, and left Rachel to return to the library and await Mrs. Bates's arrival.

Young Brett had carried away with him the vision of Miss Conway's radiant face as she stood in the Yew Walk, and had thrust down into the shadows that curious fancy of what she might be which he had seen in the dim glass of the pool. The ordinary reality resembled neither. Rachel, as she sat in Lauriston's library, was very beautiful, calm, and sad. She could not be otherwise than sad. She had been compelled to look, from her childhood, too deeply into her own soul. There is much outward sadness in the world which every one must see, yet to some of us it is above all things a place of unacknowledged sorrow.

But if Rachel was sad, at least the calmness was a gain. The troubled depths of her life were stilled, and could reflect the sunlight of other lives. Nothing was changed, yet the look of fear had gone out of her eyes. She did not know precisely when or why the old terror had ceased to trouble her; it was like a pain which has become so habitual that one hardly feels that day by day it is duller than of old, and a too swift recognition of its departure might almost bring it back. Rachel's dread was like a malignant charm which should slowly lose its efficacy. Partly, perhaps, it had died away on the day when she said good-bye to Adam Lauriston. His passionate conviction of his uselessness to her, his readiness to leave her, came back to her later as a strong assurance that the man in all the world who knew her best had no fear for her future. He had helped her that day, though he did not know it. And he had trusted her with Will!

The persistent dreams which had made night more terrible even than the cold certainty of day, were less frequent and less hideous. The grey lady had been the central figure of them all, sometimes simply seen as Rachel had actually seen her; sometimes, at the end of long wanderings through sunless mazes, appearing suddenly in some place of unutterable loneliness. But the image of the grey lady had grown blurred and indistinct since Mrs. Marchmont had made her human. Rachel could not recall her without recalling the yearning cry, "Oh, I loved Agatha!"

She dreamed still and dreamed vividly, but it was of her sorrow rather than of her fear. She often dreamed of Adam Lauriston. Sometimes he was turning at the door to come back to her, but he never came. Sometimes she was hurrying along the road which skirted the park, to meet him at the little gate; but the road would change, and the gate was nowhere to be found. Once, since she came to Redlands, she dreamed that she went into the library by night, and he was sitting in his chair with the candlelight shining on his face. She was not frightened, she only wanted him to speak to her. But he was silent as the grave, as silent as the picture which faced him. It seemed to Rachel in her dream that he was silent because of the picture, as if but for that he would have risen and come to her. She did not touch him, she did not speak to him, she did not even go near him. She only stood and looked at the pair, and the dream ended. But it was so strangely life-like that when she woke from her sleep she could not shake off the remembrance, and lay absently wondering whether she would not one day awaken from the reality.

Perhaps, however, her fear had received its death blow that evening, when Dick made his promise across the little white bed. When once she could cry to Destiny, "Do your worst if only the boy is safe!" the worst was no longer terrible.

People talk of life as a vale of tears till the expression is repulsively hackneyed. Rachel was astonished when she suddenly discovered a meaning in it. She seemed to herself to have passed out of the Valley of the Shadow of Death, grim, desolate, and lonely, into a vale of sadness, and still waters, and soft twilight harmony, where she could rest. For others she had still something to desire, but for herself nothing. She said to herself that for her nothing more was possible.

She sat with a book in her hand till a servant announced that Mrs. Bates had come, and waited to know if Miss Conway would see her. "Show Mrs. Bates in here," she said quickly, "and tell nurse I want Master Will." The visitor came in, a stout woman, dressed in rusty black with many flounces, who had the demure primness of manner which characterises an ex-servant while paying a call. She is conscious of having been a servant, and conscious that she is no longer a servant. Miss Conway welcomed the new-comer with a smile, and asked her to sit down till the little boy should come.

The woman thanked her, and dropped heavily into a chair, with a remark about "the dreadful 'eat and not being accustomed to much walking."

Miss Conway looked compassionately at Mrs. Bates's complexion, which was uncomfortably fiery. "You are tired?" she said. "You feel the heat very much?" And she promptly rang for wine and biscuits.

Mrs. Bates cast inquiring glances round the stately room. With its tall windows looking to the north, it had a melancholy aspect, even at midsummer, but she seemed to be measuring its length and height,

and valuing the tables and chairs, and the multitude of books, with complete satisfaction. "It was a long walk across the park, and 'ot," she said, as she took a large glass of port. "But a beautiful place."

"The park is very pretty," Rachel agreed. And Mrs. Bates began to eat a biscuit, with elaborate precautions against dropping any crumbs.

"Quite a mansion, now, isn't it?" she said, fixing her attention on the curtains and carpet as if she had a right to take pride in every detail. "A beautiful place indeed, m'm. I wouldn't wish to see a finer house, no, nor grounds."

"I'm glad you like it so much," said Rachel with a smile. "It is generally considered a nice house, I think. And the village is pretty, too, isn't it?"

"Very much so indeed, m'm." A couple of gardeners were rolling the turf just outside the window, which gave Mrs. Bates the opportunity of remarking, as she sipped her wine, that such places took a deal of keeping up, but that she had always understood that the late Mr. Lauriston was very well to do.

"Oh, yes!" said Rachel, so readily that Mrs. Bates nodded approval. "Ah!" she said, "so I always understood. A fine house, and a rich master—that's how it should be, m'm." She had drained her glass, and now seemed to be in such serious difficulties with her dry biscuit, that Miss Conway offered to refill it. The offer was accepted with a grateful murmur of thanks, and something about not being in the 'abit of taking wine, but being tired and 'eated with her walk.

Mrs. Bates took a large sip of port, looked down into her glass to see what remained, and began to talk of her journey. She grew more fluent as the first stiffness wore off, and varied her conversation with a few facts of her family history, which seemed to be but slenderly connected with the subject. But she returned abruptly from the aunt who had a passion for damson tart, to the object of her visit. "And well worth coming to see is a place like this," she declared; "and as you say, m'm, they should be rich folks to live in it. But there's not many richer than the late gentleman, I do suppose?" she said with an inquiring glance.

"Oh, not so rich as that!" Miss Conway replied, laughing a little in spite of herself.

The woman's countenance fell, but only for a moment. "Not *many*, I'll be bound," she repeated firmly. "You'll excuse me, m'm, but having lived in one neighbourhood all my life, and being respected there, I naturally know the gentry's houses, and have seen over them." So little remained in her glass that she decided to invert it in a very thorough fashion, and then set it down. "Palaces," said Mrs. Bates, "I do not know, and London 'ouses I do not know, and I will frankly confess it, for such is always my way. But for a gentleman's country house I will make bold to say that you may go far and not see one like this. And so it should be." She raised her eyes as she spoke, and stopped short,

with a sudden change of expression. "Why, there's my dearie! Her very self!" she said almost in a whisper, and gazed at the painting over the fireplace.

"Yes," said Rachel; "that is Mrs. Lauriston. It is like her, then?" she questioned with a faintly reluctant curiosity.

"Like her!" Mrs. Bates ejaculated; "it's herself! Oh, but what a pity she should be took in that play-acting dress, and with no jewellery; nothing but flowers and bits of ribbon! Why, I've seen her better dressed than that when she was just little missy, going out to parties with her pa; in white muslin, and her poor ma's pearl necklace and bracelets on. Oh, you should have seen her on her wedding day, m'm! I'd have had her painted in her white satin and veil."

"She must have been very beautiful," said Rachel.

"And that you may say!" Mrs. Bates exclaimed. "And so the gentlemen about us thought," with a triumphant nod, "and she might have had her pick and choice. Oh, dear! it seems but yesterday that she came laughing in, my pretty, and says she, 'I'm going to look my best to-night, old nurse, for there's a gentleman coming to dinner.' 'What,' says I, 'Mr. Harry Carew?' For I'd seen what was going on; it was always my way to keep my eyes open, and to be sure I thought it was Mr. Carew was to be the happy man. A fine young gentleman he was, six foot if he was an inch, and a way with him! And might have money too, if he married to please his uncle and aunt, though it was little enough he had of his own, no more than missy herself was likely to have with her pa's goings on. 'Mr. Harry Carew?' I said. 'No,' says she, 'he's a stranger; he doesn't live near here; he's got a house in town, and a big country house,' meaning this, you know, m'm. And says she in her joking way, 'How do you think I should do for a fine London lady, old nurse?' 'My pretty,' says I, 'you'd do for a queen.' And so she would.

"And she did look well that night, for I stood on the stairs, and saw her go in to dinner with the late Mr. Lauriston. And the next day she was out riding with him, and showing him about, and when she came in she came straight to me, with her eyes shining and her lips laughing like, and says she, 'He's promised to go to some friends in Dorsetshire the day after to-morrow, nurse.' 'Well,' says I, 'and what's that to laugh about? Are you tired of the gentleman already?' She laughed at that, her pretty little laugh. 'D'ye think he'll go, nurse?' says she, and looked back over her shoulder. 'They want him very particular,' says she; 'd'ye think he'll go?' 'Why no, my dear,' says I, 'not if you look at him like that.' And no more he did."

"No?" said Rachel, mechanically, looking up at the shepherdess.

"No!" said Mrs. Bates, triumphantly, "not he. Her own way she always would have, and did have, and quite right too; for why shouldn't she? And always she'd said that she'd be a rich lady, and have her carriages and her balls. And the week wasn't out before she showed

me a ring"—Miss Conway clasped her hands suddenly in her lap—"and said she was going to be married to Mr. Lauriston in two months' time, and she brought him to see me. 'Take care of her,' says I, 'for there's not many like her.' And he spoke very well about it; about not forgetting what a young thing and innocent she was, and he'd take care of her. A pleasant-spoken gentleman; but, if I may say so, m'm, too small and dark for my liking; I'd rather it had been Mr. Harry Carew for looks. I couldn't but ask missy what she thought he'd feel like on the wedding day. 'Poor Harry,' says she—just so—'poor Harry! he'd better marry Minnie Morgan, if his aunt'll let him.' (The youngest Miss Morgan, the clergyman's daughter, she meant, m'm.) 'She's been after him this year or more,' says missy. And true enough she had, for I'd seen her myself."

Rachel did not know what to say or where to look. The old woman gazing up at the picture with passionate fondness, while she laid bare the cold deceit of the beautiful shepherdess, struck her as a figure at once grotesque, pathetic, and horrible. A terrible clearness lit up the painted Arcadia, and it seemed like coarse theatrical scenery in a grey noonday. This, then, was the woman Adam Lauriston had loved! "And did he?" she said at last. "Did Mr. Carew marry Miss Morgan?"

"Why no, m'm; he married a farmer's daughter not three weeks after missy went away. And his aunt she'd never speak to him again, and none of the gentlefolks take any notice of her, as was to be expected. You'll excuse me, m'm," and Mrs. Bates rose, and went a few steps to get a better light on the picture. "It's wonderful!" she said. "Any one 'ud think she was just going to speak. But you'll never speak any more, my dearie! Ah, well!" said Mrs. Bates, drawing herself up, and seeming almost to forget Rachel's presence, "you always said you'd have a fine house, and be a better lady than the best of them, and you did, too! And your London house, and your carriages and footmen, and I'll be bound Mr. Lauriston wouldn't deny you anything. *You* knew how to manage a gentleman like that. I'd like to see who you couldn't manage, bless your pretty innocent face! And you not twenty when you died! Oh, it's a fine place!" said the old woman, looking proudly round, "and glad I am to see it. And a grand lady you were, my dearie, though you weren't spared long to enjoy it. There's no understanding the ways of Providence," said Mrs. Bates devoutly, turning to Miss Conway again, and sinking into her chair.

The door opened and Will appeared, carefully dressed for the occasion in black velvet, with a falling collar of lace. He came halfway across the room with his slightly limping walk, then halted, considered Mrs. Bates with an impartial gaze, and went to Miss Conway.

"Go and speak to Mrs. Bates," said Rachel. "She knew your mamma a long while ago, when she was a little girl, and she has come a great way to see you."

"Won't you come and speak to me?" said Mrs. Bates. "There's a little dear; you've got a kiss for your ma's old nurse, *I* know."

"*You're* my mamma," said Will, looking down, and fingering Rachel's chain.

"No, no," she answered, in a constrained voice. "Don't you remember, I showed you your mamma's likeness up there, over the fire-place. Look up now, and you'll recollect what I said."

"That's not my mamma," he persisted. "She's only paint. What's the good of a picture mamma?"

"Oh, don't, my dear; oh, don't!" Mrs. Bates entreated, with ready tears. "I can't bear to hear you denying your poor dead mamma with her very lips, so to speak, for you've got her pretty mouth, and just her voice as I remember it when she wasn't your age. Oh, dear! oh dear!"

"Go to Mrs. Bates, Will," said Miss Conway, with gentle decision.

Will went, and submitted to be kissed and praised, though he wriggled a little. "I don't like port wine!" he said in his clear little voice.

"Oh, no," said Mrs. Bates; "little boys shouldn't have port wine, should they? That's for us old people, isn't it? And for grown-up ladies and gentlemen," she added hastily, in case port should happen to be Miss Conway's favourite drink. "He favours his papa about the eyes, don't you think so, m'm? But else he's his mamma's own boy, bless him!"

A bystander might have concluded that his papa had very sulky eyes, and that the expression of his mamma's mouth was far from amiable. Will released himself with a sudden twist just in time to escape more kisses.

"Don't be rude, Will!" cried Miss Conway.

"She'd done," said Will, with calm mendacity, keeping safely out of reach.

"Oh, never mind, m'm; don't scold the little dear! Children will be children, and we can't expect it otherwise!" Mrs. Bates exclaimed, struggling to her feet. "His mamma was wilful too, when she was little; many's the time I've had cause to know it! But what's that when we love the little dears? And now I'll say good afternoon and thank you kindly, m'm. Often and often I've thought of Redlands Hall, and I'm glad to have set eyes on it at last, my pretty one's own house as it was, and I wish she'd been spared to enjoy it longer. Good afternoon, m'm, and good afternoon to the little gentleman." Will had turned his back on the company, and was watching the gardeners from one of the tall windows.

"Say goodbye to Mrs. Bates, Will."

"'Bye," said Will, hurriedly glancing over his shoulder.

The old woman wiped her eyes, and nodded to Will's little velvet back, glanced dubiously at her empty glass (as if to make quite sure that it had not mysteriously refilled itself), and made a laborious curtsy to Miss Conway. But her last lingering look was cast upward at the picture, a lingering look with a smile of fond devotion. She was hardly

out of the room before Will exclaimed, "Now I may go! I'm making a raft upstairs in the nursery."

Rachel looked from the beautiful face on the wall to the living little likeness of it below, and caught her breath as if she had been stabbed. "Stop a moment," she said; "come here."

He came. It was with something of an effort that she laid her hands lightly on his shoulders, and then with quivering fingers smoothed the lace at his throat. Will, perplexed first by the tone in which she had spoken, and then by her silence, looked up at her inquiringly. Their eyes met, and the likeness vanished; they were Lauriston's eyes, questioning her from under the child's delicate brows, with, as it seemed to her, more than childish earnestness. Her answering gaze swam in tears; she knelt down and kissed him. "Oh, my Will!" she murmured, with her lips on his hair; "*his* boy, not hers—not hers!" Will threw back his head and looked at her, with those dear bright eyes of his shining with intelligence.

"Don't cry," he said; "I'm not going away. I won't ever be Mrs. Bates's little boy. "Only," he added truthfully, "I do want to finish my raft."

"Go, darling," said Rachel, smiling as she stood up; and Will was gone in a moment.

She remained where he had left her, gazing fixedly before her, with downcast eyes from which the tears were dried. The picture had spoken at last, and this was the answer to the questioning of years. Mrs. Bates, flushed with her glasses of port and the summer heat, dragging off a clammy glove, and dabbing her face with a cotton handkerchief, had come expressly to solve the mystery of Mr. Lauriston's love. Her watery eyes had twinkled with pride while she dishonoured the beautiful woman she worshipped, laying bare her idol's cold heart in triumphant unconsciousness. Mr. Lauriston's life came out of the shadow as she spoke, and revealed its hidden pain. There had been the silence of scorn, ending in the heavy silence of death, but Mrs. Bates had come to break it once for all.

Rachel raised her head. To her fancy there was an insolent frankness in the painted smile, a hateful challenge in the radiant glance, and, moved by a sudden impulse, she went to the further side of the writing-table and rested her hand on the back of Adam Lauriston's chair. So standing, she looked up with grave intentness. There could hardly have been a more utter quiet in the room when he sat there that last night. Rachel was so still that but for the slow, deeply-drawn breath that came and went, she might have been only a carved or painted likeness of life; indeed her set and meditative mouth seemed less ready to speak than the delicate red lips of the portrait.

She had always silenced her conscience on the score of ingratitude to Adam Lauriston with the remembrance that in the secret recesses of his heart he hid the talisman of his dead wife's love. What she out of

her blighted life might give or withhold seemed to her a matter of little moment compared with that. His sisters had never cared for him ; Laura did not care ; Dick took his gifts with his own shrug of the shoulders ; but the beautiful woman who had once been his made amends for all with her sweet memory. And now that inmost shrine was open before her eyes, and it held nothing but the sorriest deceit, the most commonplace betrayal of Love with Judas kisses. He had silently guarded the memory of the girl who had fooled him, and whom Death, jesting in his ghastly fashion, had fooled in her turn, in the brilliant marriage which had tempted her. Rachel could understand the bitter scorn of his folly which had led him to look on, neither aiding nor denying, while that folly crystallised into a story of passionate constancy which should be the one thing by which those who had known him would remember him when he was dead. She could understand how he had shrunk from his boy, and yet carelessly flung him the price for which his mother had sold herself. This was the fresh spring which was to water his lonely life ; this that was a thousand times more bitter than gall !

Her thoughts came to her so clearly expressed in words that they seemed like actual speech, uttered to herself and to Adam Lauriston, only without a sound. No sound was needed. She tightened her hand on the chair. "If I had known !" she said, "Adam ! if I had known ! Is it too late ? That afternoon when we parted, did you by chance understand better than I did ? Was that why you stopped at the door and were coming back to me ? If I had known !"

He had declared that he was going to the New World, but that they would meet again. Rachel was not one of the few people who are altogether free from superstition. She laughed at herself, and yet she dwelt on those words. Was it possible that some Power had spoken through Adam Lauriston's lips with a larger meaning than he had himself perceived ? Might there be a new life in a new world in which they two should meet—a new life, free from all the sick and poisonous fancies which had clung about the old ? "Listen," she said, almost as if she stood on its threshold while she spoke, "I could never say it here—I did not know you needed me—but I love you ! Is it too late ?" She called up his face before her. She saw him with his shining eyes, his melancholy smile ; she suddenly recalled that slight shrug of the shoulders which was such a familiar memory. She started as if she had been stung. Was that Adam Lauriston's answer ? The book which he had given her lay open on the table. "*Rien ne refleurlra,*" it proclaimed.

Laisse retomber dans leur nuit éternelle
L'amour et le bonheur que tu n'as point goûtés.

• • • • •
La vie est ainsi faite, il nous la faut subir ;
Le faible souffre et pleure, et l'insensé s'irrite ;
Mais le plus sage en rit, sachant qu'il doit mourir.

"Well!" she said; "and if it is so I will love you as you loved me, with no hope; and even so I would change with no woman living. And I thank God for the Rutherford blood in my veins, which has kept me apart—for you! Oh, do you not hear me say that?"

The silence was so absolute, it seemed to penetrate and fill her very soul. Suddenly a sound from the outer world rushed in; the door flew open, and Will appeared, announcing breathlessly, "It's no use to go and play; there isn't time! The carriage is coming round directly; you said it was to come at four. Oh, do go and get ready; it will be round in five minutes, and I want four o'clock to come!"

"I'll be ready," said Rachel. "Get your cap, Will, and I'll come." Before she left the room she closed the open book upon the table, and looked compassionately at the lonely shepherdess. Her falsehood seemed such a pitiful failure, and Will had denied her.

The child chatted all the way as they drove, and the points of the roadside scenery that Rachel remembered, appeared and vanished as in a hurrying dream. The Pattendens' farm was suddenly revealed, where it stood by the grey-gleaming curves of the little river; the poplars quivered, a dog barked, the gnarled boughs reached over the orchard fence. "Haven't they got a lot of apples?" said Will. "But we've got a lot, too; I wish they were ripe." Then they slackened their speed, climbing the steep hill-side. When they came to the edge of the moorland the carriage was stopped and they got out.

Will ran forward with a cry of delight, but had not gone ten steps before he turned to look for Rachel. She was lingering on the edge of the moor, for which, in her day-dreams, she had so often longed, which, to her fancy, had pictured a land of health and peace. And she was not even looking at it. There where she had stood, thinking of Mr. Lauriston before he came into her life, she stood now when he had passed out of it, and her glances went backward, full of tender desire, to Redlands Hall, lying in its far off hollow on the hill-side, with a golden light upon its masses of trees. No place in all the world could ever be so dear to her as that, which was dear for the sake of vain regrets and hopeless love.

But Will caught her by the hand. "What are you looking at? I don't want you to stop and look at that! I like this awfully; come on, quick, it's much prettier further on." Rachel smiled, and suffered herself to be drawn onward, by the small, live fingers which stirred impatiently in her clasp. The past was buried in silence. She could bear to turn her back on it because she held its record in her heart, and to go forward because the light of Will's happier future was shining on her way.



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